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The Week

THAT the blockade of Spain instituted by the Non-Intervention Committee actually increases the danger of international war instead of diminishing it was dramatically illustrated when government planes bombed the German battleship "Deutschland" in the harbor of Iviza, killing and wounding a number of sailors, and Germany retaliated by a naval bombardment of Almeria, causing much destruction and loss of life. This incident is discussed at greater length in another column. Senator Borah, calling the incident war, recommended the application of our neutrality legislation to Germany. Secretary Hull verbally expressed to Berlin his hope for an amicable settlement. . . . Previously Spain had protested to the League of Nations Council against foreign intervention, issuing a White Book that contained a hundred damning documents against Italy and one—omitted from the publicity—against Germany. At the instance of Britain and France the protest was played down and the whole matter politely referred to the Non-Intervention Committee in London. . . . No progress is apparently being made in the British attempt to obtain the voluntary withdrawal of foreign forces and a truce. . . . According to program, Neville Chamberlain became Prime Minister of Britain, and took the reins just in time to face the new crisis in the Spanish affair. Mr. Baldwin was rewarded by King George for his services with an Earldom and a Garter. Ramsay MacDonald, declining a peerage, retired from the Cabinet. Sir John Simon was promoted to the troublesome post of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Sir Samuel Hoare became Home Secretary. Anthony Eden, of course, remained in charge of foreign affairs. . . . Germany intensified the religious war against both Catholics and Protestants, signalizing it with a huge mass meeting addressed by Propaganda Minister Göbbels. . . . Ireland decided not to insist on being called Eire after all, retaining the familiar name in English, and using the new one only in the Gaelic version of its Constitution.

VIOLENCE underlined the dispute between the CIO and the steel independents, as well as the attempt to unionize Ford workers. About 75,000 men struck in the plants of Republic, Youngstown and Bethlehem Steel because these concerns declined to sign contracts with the union embodying any terms whatever. Republic attempted to continue operations, while the others shut down. A parade of pickets, approaching the Republic plant in South Chicago, encountered police; five union men were killed by gunfire and many were injured, while there were several minor casualties on the side of the police. In Youngstown the pickets concentrated upon trying to prevent the shipment of food and supplies to non-union maintenance men in the plant, the union having offered to permit maintenance men from its own ranks to remain at work, and the offer having been refused. Picketing and counter-picketing even took to the air, with planes on both sides. . . . Union officers attempting to distribute literature at the Ford River Rouge plant were set upon and beaten—according to the union, by Ford service men; according to the Ford management, by loyal workers. . . . The A.F. of L. carried the inter-union warfare to an open issue by ordering all central labor bodies to expel CIO delegates, deciding to start competing unions in CIO territory, and doubling per-capita dues for an organization campaign.

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Meanwhile numerous A.F. of L. unions prepared to switch to the CIO, whose organizing drive rolled massively on. . . . A House bloc tried to earmark large parts of the relief appropriation for specific projects and was opposed by the President. . . . A drive on income-tax evaders was threatened. . . . The right-wing Socialists in convention called for peace between the A.F. of L. and the CIO, and asked for a labor party.

FIVE men are dead and ninety are injured as a result of a battle whose central issue presumably was settled by the United States Supreme Court weeks ago. When a picket line on May 30 marched out to the South Chicago plant of the Republic Steel Corporation to demonstrate in favor of recognition of the union—now a legally guaranteed right—the striking workers were met by 200 heavily armed police. There is the usual dispute as to who started the clash; there is no doubt whatever about the identity of the victims. The five men who were shot or clubbed to death were workers. The great majority of the injured were workers, or wives and children of workers. City police have made blustering charges of being attacked and fired upon, yet the officers admitted that no arms were found upon any of the scores of strikers arrested in the clash. Leaders of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee are preparing to file formal charges of murder against the police. The battle at the Republic mills followed by a few days the particularly brutal beating up of CIO organizers outside the gates of the Ford plant in Detroit. In this case there is direct photographic evidence that peaceful organizers who were not even distributing handbills were set upon, slugged and kicked. The La Follette Civil Liberties Committee is preparing to give this case a thorough airing. What is particularly impressive about both cases is the tragic needlessness of this slaughter and suffering—the victims are like the soldiers who were killed at five minutes to eleven on the morning of November 11, 1918. The war is over. Labor has won the right to organize and sooner or later even Henry Ford and the steel "independents" must recognize that fact.

IT IS good news for several reasons that the cases of Dr. J. Raymond Walsh and Dr. Alan R. Sweezy are to be reopened by Harvard University. As our readers already know, nationwide comment on the cases of these two men, who were given two-year "terminating appointments," has raised the question whether their dismissal did not violate the principles of academic freedom, as well as depriving the Harvard Department of Economics of two of its ablest young men, whose point of view is in general progressive. A short time ago, nine senior professors at Harvard received a petition from 131 of the junior teaching officers of the university asking them to conduct an investigation. President Conant promptly, diplomatically and intelligently invited the same nine men to make the inquiry on behalf of the University itself. We welcome this outcome because it offers the hope that what we still believe was an injustice to Messrs. Walsh and Sweezy may be rectified and also because it puts into effect a principle we have frequently advocated—that of asking the faculty itself to intervene in the case of disputed dismissals from a university staff.

THE motion pictures of the Coronation have now been exhibited throughout the United States, in even the third-run movie theatres. Everyone with whom we have discussed the matter, who has seen these films, has agreed with us that the usually efficient British imperial propaganda machine slipped a cog when they were permitted to leave England. The movies are even duller than was the ceremony on the radio; and they show, in many instances, a conspicuous lack of that hysterical enthusiasm of the crowd that was supposed to accompany the big show. They also confirm the feeling that the Coronation ritual is about four times as long as it ought to be to suit the tempo of these times. Many people have commented on the amazingly bad figure cut by the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose voice and presence are such that he should probably be kept off the screen. Possibly loyal British subjects do not share the views quoted above; but for many Americans there is no doubt that the Coronation news coincided most unhappily with what seems to be the deliberate persecution, by Church and State, of the Duke of Windsor and the lady who will be his wife by the time most of our readers see these words. For the sake of Anglo-American harmony, now of such great importance to the world, it would have been better if all prints of these films had been quietly dumped into the sea.

THE gleeful unanimity with which members of the Senate are urging the appointment of majority-leader Joseph T. Robinson to the Supreme Court should carry its own warning to the President. Machine politicians on the Democratic side see in Presumptive Justice Robinson a kind of apotheosis of the faithful party worker, while Republican and conservative opponents are not only willing to accept him as a "safe" appointment but also hope to circumvent and embarrass the President by supporting him. Robinson is a pleasant and even relatively superior party politician, but it is obvious that he has neither the true liberality of outlook nor downright intellect to qualify him for the Supreme Court in the crucial times through which we are passing. The President has a real fight on his hands in attempting to get Congress to adopt some much needed Court reforms and it would be a disheartening blow to progressives in the thick of the fight to learn that the result of their struggle would be the appointment of Senator Robinson to fill the first vacancy that has occurred since the fight began. When Mr. Justice Van Devanter resigns one hardly expects to find him replaced by a friend of the Arkansas planters and utility magnates, for in that

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case it might be difficult indeed to detect any change in the complexion of the Court.

IN THE pages of Variety we find an interesting account of the present practices of Hearst journalism in Chicago. Not long ago, it is reported, a young woman entered a police station there in an unhappy frame of mind and, between sobs, asked the police to look for her lost diary, which was broadly hinted to contain sensational material somewhat like that in the famous day book of Mary Astor. After every newspaper in Chicago had printed this juicy item, Mr. Hearst's Evening American announced that it had found the diary, which would be published in daily instalments forthwith. Says Variety: "It's reported that the whole stunt is the work of Henry Rieutlinger, city editor of The American, who has the girl installed at a Loop hotel." We warmly suggest to Mr. Hearst that he be sure to include this story in his speeches made this month at the various universities that will undoubtedly be giving him honorary degrees as a great journalist and a master of popular education.

ON May 25, the Spanish government announced that a new Ambassador to France had been appointed. He is Don Angel Ossorio y Gallardo, a Catholic and a conservative. Explaining why a conservative Catholic is supporting the government, he observed during a radio address made a few months ago: "A Christian cannot be a fascist, because Christianity stands for the liberation of the human spirit and respect for human personality, while fascism is the negation of freedom, setting up oppression and a regime of force—and that not even in the service of the poor but to safeguard the privileged classes." We respectfully submit this observation to Mr. Michael Williams and the other American Catholics who are doing everything they can to aid Franco's cause.

IN NO field does mechanical invention march forward with a steadier stride than in aviation. The other day we witnessed the first experimental flights between New York and Bermuda, with regular passenger service promised in a few weeks. Trans-Atlantic air service is not far away, through a coöperative arrangement between Pan American Airways and British Imperial Airways. Elaborate research, conducted at tremendous expense, has brought us to the verge of stratosphere flying; the experts say that in the near future overland flights of 600 miles and more will be conducted at about 30,000 feet, in completely sealed cabins conditioned not only as to temperature and humidity but air pressure. At such a height, the airplane is above nearly all adverse atmospheric conditions, including fog, rain and wind. The development of blind or instrument flying also goes on, with a reasonable hope that crashes because of low visibility may soon be a thing of the past. Military aviation, of course, benefits from commercial progress, and vice versa. The flying range of a heavy bomber has increased from 160 miles (and return) during the World War to 1,500 miles (and return) in ships of a type now under construction. In the June issue of Asia Magazine, John Williams describes a new method of launching by means of a railroad cradle car which will alter the whole picture of airplane defense and attack. Thanks to aviation, the world is rapidly getting a great deal smaller and, as things are going, a great deal less healthy—for everybody.

THIS is just to broadcast the announcement that we are good and sick and tired of the public discussion as to who is to play the leading role in the movie version of "Gone with the Wind." The first two or three thousand news stories we stood pretty well; but about the time they had suggested every telephone subscriber in the Hollywood book, separately, and started in on Santa Monica, we began to get a glassy look in the eye, palpitation of the heart and shortness of breath. Now we don't care who plays Rhett. We have forgotten whether the character is a man (Clark Gable) or a woman (Miriam Hopkins). We don't care whether or not they ever make the film. On the night of its super-super-super opening on Broadway, we intend to curl up at home with a set of page proofs of our favorite periodical (The New Republic). We are ashamed of the press agents for working a good idea *ad nauseam*. We are ashamed of the papers for accepting all this guff, and of the pop-eyed morons who, we hear, have breathlessly devoured every last syllable. We are ashamed of ourselves for taking the trouble to write this editorial note.

WE SALUTE a newcomer in American journalism, The Beacon, a progressive-minded monthly now making its appearance in Chicago. A city that receives so high a proportion of its printed matter from Hearst, McCormick and Knox is in genuine need of a publication with an enlightened point of view. Sydney Justin Harris is editor of The Beacon and the issue he sends us contains informative articles of specific interest to Chicagoans, as well as comment on national and international affairs. We are pleased to welcome The Beacon as a kind of neighborhood New Republic, and we hope that other sections of the country may develop similar publications.

IN OUR highly mechanized America, music has become one of the most precarious of professions. The movies and the radio have all but wiped out local concerts and orchestras in many communities and the country as a whole tends to get its music from the screen or through a loudspeaker. A healthy corrective for this trend is furnished by the Federal Music Project. They are restoring not only direct performances of music but direct participation in music as well. This is being done on a scale that will surprise many people. For instance, the latest report just released by Dr. Nikolai Sokoloff, general

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director of the Projects, shows that more than forty-five cities in the United States are now hearing regularly scheduled symphony concerts. This is many times the number of cities that could otherwise hear such concerts, which are notoriously difficult to finance. The range of Federal Music Projects includes some forty operas, as well as operettas, oratorios, and musical performances of all kinds. Special services include musical "laboratory units" in which talented American composers may hear their compositions actually played and get valuable suggestions for rescoring and improvement. In all, the works of some 1,481 American composers have been performed in various Project concerts. Not the least valuable of Project activities are the classes studying music under WPA teachers. The response to these has been tremendous. In a state chosen at random—Oklahoma—there are 155 teaching centers with a class attendance of 45,000 per week, and similar interest is registered in other parts of the country.

Deutschland and Almeria

THE WORLD has in the past few days been concerned with a ticklish question: at what point must violent intervention in Spain by Germany and Italy cease to be called non-intervention and instead be called war? As long as it is called non-intervention, Britain and France may pretend that decisive action on their part is unnecessary; the moment it becomes war, the lid is off and the international conflict for supremacy in Spain will certainly spread beyond the Iberian Peninsula.

Consider for a moment the facts. Large bodies of Italian troops have been fighting with the rebels; they were dispatched by Mussolini and commanded by Italian officers. German technical troops have been sent by Hitler to Franco's armies and are aiding them. Italian and German planes have been bombing Spanish cities; some of these were operated by Italian and German army aviators. The rebels have been plentifully supplied with arms and munitions from Germany and Italy, countries which export nothing without the consent of their governments. The German and Italian navies have been assisting the rebels on the sea.

Without any change whatever in this situation, the Italian and German navies were assigned by the Non-Intervention Committee in London the duty of blockading Spanish government ports to prevent the arrival of foreign volunteers or military supplies, while the French and British assumed the same function on the borders of rebel territory. One can hardly blame the government forces for regarding the Italian and German ships as enemies, and suspecting them of giving other aid to the rebels while carrying out the duties assigned from London.

Against this background the facts as to what actually happened in the "Deutschland" incident assume a minor technical importance. A clash of some sort would surely be expected by any reasonable person. It is admitted by both sides that the "Deutschland" was in the harbor of Iviza, a rebel port. It was thus within the twelve-mile limit of what the Spanish government regards as territorial waters—and outside these the blockading ships were supposed to perform their work. From Iviza rebel air-bombing expeditions have attacked government cities. The port was therefore a legitimate object of attack. The government cites an order by the German admiral bidding his ships to look out for loyalist airplanes and "take appropriate measures" when their approach was detected. Three planes went to bomb Iviza. In order to do so they had to pass near the "Deutschland." Her presence in the harbor could not rightfully bar their approach; if it had done so it would have constituted protection of the rebel base. Then comes the disputed charge that the "Deutschland" fired on the planes. This was immediately announced by the Spanish government, coupled with the news that the planes had returned the fire. Many hours later Berlin denied the accusation.

Whatever really happened, loyal international coöperation by the German government would seem to have required a protest to the Non-Intervention Committee, an investigation by the latter of the facts and circumstances, and the international imposition of reparations, if reparations were due. Instead, however, Germany took matters into her own hands, acted as a private belligerent, and in revenge bombarded Almeria. This was a fortified city next in line for rebel attack in the advance toward Valencia from Malaga. It is also an important seaport supplying Madrid. Thus the revenge was of practical aid to Franco. Another dispute about facts arises from this incident. Berlin maintains that the bombardment was directed against the fortifications only, apparently reliable news dispatches assert that it raked the city, killing and wounding civilians, including women and children.

Swiftly applied pressure from London and Paris seems to have stopped the development of hostilities at this point. In the meantime, however, Germany and Italy have withdrawn from the Non-Intervention Committee until its instructions and assurances can be so defined as to prevent future danger of clashes between patrolling ships and Spanish forces. But the ships remain in Spanish waters, while Italy and Germany remain in effect allies of Franco. Obviously the danger of trouble is increased rather than diminished. It would appear to us that the appropriate reply to Germany and Italy from the Non-Intervention Committee would be: While ostensibly acting as agents of this committee you have ignored and defied it, and now you have withdrawn from it. Very well, your help is not wanted; henceforth the work of the Committee will be performed exclusively by its remaining members. British and French ships will be dispatched to patrol the Spanish government coast. Kindly withdraw your forces of sea, land and air.

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Foreign Stakes in Spain

NO WAR goes on for very long without the discovery of substantial economic interests behind the slogans and high principles. Is Franco trying to conquer Spain, and are Mussolini and Hitler helping him, simply for the sake of an abstract doctrine called fascism? Of course not; behind Franco are substantial property interests—including a large part of the Catholic Church—which fear the leftward tendency of the loyalist government. Even more important from the international point of view is the fact that Spain is a storehouse of valuable raw materials which Hitler and Mussolini need in their programs of becoming self-sufficient and better prepared for war. In this respect Spain would be a far more useful colony than any in a remote part of Africa, Asia or South America.

In the Bilbao district, which General Franco is trying so hard to capture, at the temporary expense of his campaign for Madrid or Valencia, lies one of the most accessible and richest deposits of iron ore in Europe. The British iron and steel industry now imports almost a million tons a year of this high-grade ore, for which her domestic deposits of low-grade ore can hardly be substituted. The iron and steel industries of Germany and Italy, on the other hand, are suffering from a shortage of materials due to exchange difficulties, and would benefit greatly by access to this ore, for which they would presumably pay by military and political assistance. Spain's proved reserves of iron ore amount to 711,000,000 tons, and there are unproved reserves as well. In addition, Spanish Morocco contains about 25,000,000 tons. Can these facts have anything to do with the renewed interest of Britain in stopping the war and removing foreign troops, when Bilbao was threatened? Or with Mussolini's refusal to coöperate with this suggestion?

Copper, pyrites and sulphur are found in the British-owned mines in Rio Tinto, already requisitioned by Franco and used to pay for help from abroad. It is estimated that in Huelva Province there are 2,000,000,000 tons of copper-bearing pyrites, and with a recovery of only one percent, the metallic copper obtainable would thus be 20,000,000 tons. The need of Germany for copper, especially for war purposes, is well known. Imports of Spanish ore into Germany increased from 37,210 tons in December to 206,707 tons in January. Britain, of course, would never consent to the permanent seizure of these mines by Franco without compensation. But England buys from Spain large quantities of oranges, sherry and tomatoes, mostly now from territory controlled by Franco, and he could use the sterling exchange so obtained to compensate the British mine owners.

In the Almaden area are the largest mercury deposits in the world, sufficient to supply the normal annual consumption by the entire globe for a hundred years. The next largest deposit is in Italy. Since Spain and Italy together provide four-fifths of the world's production, it is possible that Mussolini would like to control the Spanish field in order to create a monopoly and restrict output in the interest of profits.

The potash basin, near Barcelona, is as important as the German and French deposits, and is probably richer. Manganese, lead, zinc, tin, coal and lignite, and sulphur also are produced in considerable quantities and are regularly exported.

It is quite clear that Franco is not so much the defender of an idea or a principle as the advance agent of German and Italian imperialism. These nations are fighting for their new colonial empire at the present moment. They hope to capture it from the Spanish people, and to control its political system so that they may divert its valuable raw materials from Britain and France to themselves.

The British Commonwealth Confers

THE British Imperial Conference, now meeting in London, is in reality a consultation among semi-independent nations, held together by tradition, formal political ties and economic considerations, but nevertheless with a number of divergent aims and points of view that need adjustment. On this account, whenever the relations with the self-governing Dominions are under consideration, the British Empire, with its pageantry and power, is pushed into the background, and it becomes good form to speak rather of the British Commonwealth.

Two major questions, as well as a number of minor ones, confront the present conference. The first has to do with the unity of the Commonwealth in case of possible war. This question has been thrust into the foreground by the critical situation that has impelled Great Britain to adopt her present large and costly rearmament program. Ever since the authority of the Crown and of Parliament over the Dominions has been whittled down to the point of recognizing their rights to conduct their own external affairs, to control their own budgets and tax systems and to decide upon their own military establishments, it has at least been a legal possibility that one or more of them might remain neutral while Great Britain was at war. How could a community of free and autonomous governments be assured of united action against a possible enemy? A solution of this problem was thought to have been found, after the last war, in the League of Nations. The Dominions, like the mother nation, were members. It was assumed that any future war would be one of aggression by a power or combination of powers, which defied the League as a whole. The Dominions would therefore be under the same obligation as Britain herself to resist such aggression in

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any part of the world, no matter how little their immediate interests appeared to be concerned.

In the Ethiopian affair, however, as in other recent crises, the League principles were so weakened as to provide little assurance of common action. Sanctions stopped at economic measures, and were only partially applied. The Hoare-Laval plan itself, in which the British government was a prime mover, suggested compromise with a power that had flatly defied the League. So diminished is the prestige of the international association that the participating nations have regained the possibility of a large measure of independent judgment. In weakening the principle of collective security through the League, the British government has to that extent lost the assurance that the Dominions will be unified with it in international affairs. Undoubtedly one of the principal objectives of the British statesmen at the conference will be to find a way to reunite the Commonwealth about a policy of common defense. Upon such a policy must be based technical understandings concerning the use of naval, military and air forces. The armaments of the various Dominions, and even of India, can no longer be regarded as part of a single and unified body for defense of the Empire.

The second major question has to do with tariff policy. In the Ottawa agreements, the principle of imperial preference was established. A system of duties was worked out which was intended to encourage trade within the Empire at the expense of trade with nations outside it. This was one of the influences that increased the tendency to national self-sufficiency throughout the world and so helped to bring on the present international difficulties. It was deplored for that reason by believers in free trade and international coöperation. Moreover, there is concealed in it a divergence of interest between the Dominions and Great Britain. British statesmen wish to encourage British industry and to protect its markets in the Dominions, regarding them principally as the source of raw materials. The Dominions, on the other hand, wish to develop their own manufacture. At the present moment, also, the United States is seeking to apply its policy of reciprocal reduction of duties in an agreement with Great Britain, and is supported in this desire by a considerable body of opinion in England, but the Ottawa agreements provide obstacles. There is therefore a considerable likelihood that in the conference an attempt will be made to revise the existing agreements and prepare the way for international economic appeasement. Whether or not it can be successful in dealing with so many divergent interests it is difficult to predict.

In addition there are constitutional questions having to do with such things as nationality, treaty procedure, the international status of members of the Commonwealth. How much prominence such questions may assume is uncertain, but they are likely to be subordinate to the major issues of common policy with respect to war and trade.

The Klan in Florida

IT WOULD be hard to designate any one of several states as the most backward in the union, but certainly Florida is a chief contender. The news, therefore, that the Klan is on the warpath again in The Land of Flowers is alarming but not astonishing. The Workers' Defense League, through one of its representatives, has made public recent Klan activities and charges that the city of Tampa (where Joseph Shoemaker, a labor organizer, was kidnaped and flogged to death) is virtually run by the knights of the sheet and the pillowcase. "Last February 23," the League charges, "a group of four hundred Klansmen in full regalia initiated one hundred new members, and the ceremony was held in Lowry Park, city owned property." The League's Mr. McAllister produced a clipping from a Tampa newspaper showing Klan members in full uniform. "City officials," said Mr. McAllister, "gave permission to the Klan to use the park. The Klansmen posted guards at all entrances and permitted only their own members to enter during the ceremony. Everybody in Tampa knows that you cannot work for the city without belonging to the Klan. Firemen, clerks and policemen are all Klan members." Tampa is not the only place in Florida, Mr. McAllister continued, where the Klan is at work. Near Miami, during recent months, many beaches have put up signs, "For Gentiles Only," and in various parts of Florida, as independent observers have noticed, there are signs that read: "Negroes Keep Out—KKK." Miami, also, has passed an ordinance forbidding Negro mechanics to work in the white areas of the city. This ordinance, according to Mr. McAllister, was backed by the Building Trades Council, which does not admit Negroes to membership in Miami. It is obvious—as it has been obvious ever since the Tampa floggings—that the Florida officials lack both the integrity and the courage to suppress, or even to investigate, the activities of the hoodlums and gangsters who seem to be bringing the entire state under their domination.

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Impressions of Spain

LOOKING down from a plane over Barcelona a week ago I saw the tramcars moving along the Ramblas and the factory chimneys smoking. It was true, then, that the rising had been suppressed and order restored. This achievement, however, had cost the lives of 900 men who ought to have been facing Franco, while the wounded on both sides, following an authoritative but confidential estimate, numbered 2,500. This was by far the gravest of several armed encounters between the democratic republic and the forces of social revolution: one is not sure that it will be the last. So profound is the gulf between the thinking of Spanish Anarchists and the moderates of the People's Front that the marvel is rather that the struggle has been so long postponed. For this delay the Valencia government has to thank as much the virtues of the Anarchists as their failings. Their leaders, in spite of a feud that dated from the days of Bakunin and Marx, had had the magnanimity to join both the republican and the Catalonian governments. Down to the day of the Barcelona rising, and even after it, all their official utterances were persuasive pleas for unity and even for fusion. When they did argue their case in print it was with courtesy and restraint. Their failing is deliberate, high-principled indiscipline.

When at last they struck in Barcelona, it was without the support of their formidable mass organization, the CNT labor union. Two only of the organizations on its fringes (the Friends of Durruti and the Libertarian Youth) manned the barricades, in alliance with the Marxists of POUM. Had the CNT, with all its armed forces, attempted to seize power in the early days of the civil war, it would have won Catalonia and held it—until the inevitable foreign intervention. For tense feuds provoke two nightmares. They may open the weakly held Aragon front to a fascist offensive. They may also serve as an excuse for an Italian or even an international occupation of Barcelona, on the plea that this great city, with its many and wealthy foreign concerns, is a prey to anarchy. The prompt action of the Valencia government has removed both these dangers. But can it in this poisoned atmosphere advance over the corpses of hundreds of dead workers to its positive ends—the disarmament of the civilian population and the fusing of the volunteer party militias into a regular army? It cannot be done by force alone.

Several factors went into the making of this rising. Catalonia is intensely nationalist and with difficulty identifies her cause with that of Spain. She smashed her own local fascism in the first week of the Civil War: her mood ever since has been that of a victor. Her own territory is free, and she feels only a moderate interest in the distant Aragon Front which her forces hold. For lack of planes, tanks and artillery (as she sees it) she can undertake no hopeful offensive there, and for this she blames Russia even more bitterly than the Valencia government. They will not (she says) give arms to Anarchists, because they mean to crush them when victory is won. It was even said that the International Brigade was raised for this purpose. To these charges Valencia has three answers. First, arms even now are scarce, and must be reserved for the vital fronts. Second, the Anarchist militia is so undisciplined that to give it modern arms would be to waste them. Third, in fact the Anarchists have plenty of arms, including tanks and artillery, but they keep them for use against their more moderate comrades.

Under these arguments, as I realized during a stay in Barcelona, lurked a cruder struggle for power. When the civil war broke out, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT was, with its reputed membership of about a million, the dominant power in Catalonia. But in nine months the United Socialist and Communist Party has by brilliant organization raised the membership of its rival trade-union federation, the UGT, to some 450,000. The CNT, struggling to be loyal, none the less felt its power slipping from it. It maneuvered unskillfully; it claimed additional representation and even a majority in the Catalonian Ministry; its gangster fringe (for gunmen and bandits mingle in its undisciplined ranks with idealists who carry on the ethical tradition of Godwin and Proudhon) murdered in the week before the rising two UGT Ministers, Roldan and Sese; finally its Left Wing lost patience and made its bid for power. But the real issue lay deeper. This was, like the Spartacist tragedy in Berlin, a struggle between reformism and the will to make a proletarian revolution. POUM, which rose in alliance with the Anarchist Left, had been involved with incredible bitterness in this struggle, ever since the formation of the People's Front. It represented the older and now heretical Communist position. It opposed any alliance with the middle class even for the salvation of the republic; for the sake of political as distinct from social democracy it would make no sacrifices to unity. Against it, far more fiercely than against the Anarchists, the Communists waged a merciless feud, and charged it with all the treasons ascribed to Trotsky. It behaved with reckless partisan folly. Its leader, Nin, was calling on the eve of the rising for the instant convocation of a constituent assembly of workers, peasants and soldiers. Its newspaper backed the rising. Yet the Anarchists with whom it allied itself stand farther from its unbending Marxism than the Socialists whom it assailed with its tanks and guns, stolen from government arsenals.

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To grasp this situation one must realize that the Communists now constitute the moderate center party in republican Spain. Their propaganda, as skillful as it is pervasive, is almost exclusively defensive. It focuses attention on resistance to fascism and on a concentrated effort to win the war; it discourages talk about the future and ridicules its opponents' weakness for "plans and projects." I have before me a pamphlet by its secretary, José Diaz, which defines its objective as the creation of "a democratic and parliamentary republic of a new type." The novelty of this conception is not easy to grasp, for Diaz goes on to insist that the chief task is to destroy the material foundations of Spanish feudalism—the vast aristocratic estates, the political and economic power of the Church, and the army based on caste. Something is added, in much vaguer words, about the need for breaking up the financial oligarchy and nationalizing the Bank of Spain, but it is obvious that industry will be socialized, if at all, only partially and with extreme caution. The enemy, in short, is feudalism and less certainly big business, but small property, whether in town or country, need have no fear.

I discussed this policy with several leading Communists. They justified it mainly on two grounds. Spain is a land of peasants, who own their few acres, save in the South and West, where the great estates predominate. They cannot be driven forcibly to accept socialization—an experiment which the anarchists have tried in Aragon with disastrous results. Again, the support of the small middle class is essential, if the war is to be won. In fact the country was very evenly divided by the test of votes in February, 1936: the republic dare not throw away potential support from any quarter. Second, it dare not antagonize the Western democracies by unfurling the flag of proletarian revolution. This had the ring of everyday common sense, though I reflected that Lenin brushed aside very similar arguments in 1917. As one listened to Franco's guns in Madrid and read the news from Bilbao, this prudent moderation was intelligible. It certainly sprang as much from a study of the particular case of Spain as from any wider consideration of Russian interests.

"These," the reader may object, "are opportunist arguments, but will not the Communist Party, with or without its Socialist allies, revert to its revolutionary policy when victory is won?" That is, one supposes, the reckoning on which the British government bases its hostility to the republic. I think this development must be permanent. This prediction I base on the social composition of the Communist Party both in Catalonia (where it is fused with the Socialists) and in Spain. It retains the discipline for which it is famous: it can by its immensely skillful propaganda through posters, periodicals and broadcasting, compel the average man to think its thoughts. It has rendered incomparable services in waging the war, and it shares the gratitude that Russia has justly earned. But it is no longer primarily a party of the industrial workers or even a Marxist party. One of its leading men was describing to me its admirable work in setting up reading rooms, clubs and political schools for the army. "What do you teach?" I asked. "The fundamentals of Marxism?" "Well no," he answered, "the instruction is all on People's Front lines." Again in Catalonia a leading Communist was explaining the rapid growth of the UGT. "Much of the new membership," he said, "has come from the ranks of the Esquerra (Left middle-class Republicans). The small middle class realizes that of the two parties ours is the stouter defender of small property." The claim was true. In next day's newspaper I read a report of a gathering of retail tradesmen in Barcelona. It was the UGT which saved them from the plans of socialization backed by the Anarchist CNT.

The growth of the Party has been astonishingly rapid during the Civil War. Insignificant in numbers when that began, it is now, or soon will be, the leading political organization in republican Spain. The Socialists have, it is true, the more famous leaders, Caballero, Prieto and Del Vayo, but the prestige of the veteran ex-premier is not what it was. In nine months the Communist Party has quadrupled its membership, which now stands at 249,000 in governmental Spain, exclusive of Catalonia. Its social composition is unusual: 89,000 industrial workers as against 62,000 agricultural workers, 76,000 peasant owners, 15,000 "middle class" and 7,000 "intellectuals," together with 19,000 women. Its vigorous youth organization has, in round figures, 300,000 members. This intense activity in recruiting provoked protests from other parties, Socialist as well as Anarchist. It struck me that these new members could not have been sifted and tested with the care customary in the early years of the Party. In fairness I will give the crushing answer of the organizer to whom I put this objection. On November 7 at the worst hour of Madrid's peril, the Party called together its new members in that city. They numbered 2,000 men. Of these 1,700 volunteered for the militia. They had to stand under fire unarmed in reserve, waiting till they could receive a rifle from a dead man's hand. Of these 1,700 no less than 900 were killed in the defense of Madrid. He went on to illustrate the Party's share in the risks and labors of the active army. In three respective brigades on the Cordova front, 80, 50, and 95 percent of the men were its members.

It is a tangled tale, this Spanish epic. The heroism of simple men, who have flung their lives away for the joy of battling half-armed against feudalism, blends with the vanity of leaders and the egoism of parties. Doctrinal feuds that our grandfathers waged in learned tomes arm themselves with machine guns and wreak mass murder in the streets. I have tried to describe without judging. But when memory goes back to the bloody defeats of 1934, and faces frankly the forces that then so nearly crushed the

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Spanish workers, I think they were right to form their People's Front. Once formed, it was pledged in loyalty as in prudence to moderation. When one has seen something of the palaces of the grandees and the hovels of the peasants, to make an end of feudalism seems no small achievement. With this will come much else—a passion for education, an expansion of all the social services, coöperation among the producing peasants, workers' councils in the factories and, above all, a new sense of national unity and ambition. To this new Spain the Anarchists, if their gunmen can but be weeded out, have much to give. Liberty is their mistress, though they have loved her in day-dreams, and they too have learned to give their all to the common good, though they scorned discipline and system. With all its failings, this nation can boast that when at last it is roused to action, it moves with a will and endures to the end.

London. H. N. BRAILSFORD.

This is the first of two articles on Spain by Mr. Brailsford. The second will appear in an early issue. —THE EDITORS.

Origins of Socialism

I: *Babeuf's Defense*

This is the first of four articles dealing with the early socialists. They are the opening instalments of the second section of a series with the general title, "To the Finland Station: An Essay on the Writing and Acting of History," of which the articles on Michelet, Renan, Taine and Anatole France, published in the summer of 1934, made up the first section. The first section traced the decline of the tradition of the French Revolution in the work of the French bourgeois historians; the second section will follow the parallel rise of socialism and the first attempts of the socialists to put their philosophy of history into practice.—THE EDITORS.

THE YEARS of relaxation under the Directory which followed the fall of Robespierre were troubled by the activities of a man who called himself Gracchus Babeuf.

With the Directory the French Revolution had passed into the period of reaction which was to make possible the domination of Bonaparte. The great rising of the bourgeoisie, which, breaking out of the feudal forms of the monarchy, dispossessing the nobility and the clergy, had presented itself to society as a movement of liberation, had ended by depositing the wealth in the hands of a relatively small number of people and creating a new conflict of classes. With the reaction against the Terror, the ideals of the Revolution itself were allowed to go by the board. The five politicians of the Directory and the merchants and financiers allied with them were speculating in confiscated property, profiteering in army supplies, recklessly inflating the currency and gambling on the falling gold louis. And in the meantime, during the winter of 1795-96, the working people of Paris were dying of hunger and cold in the streets.

Babeuf was the son of a Protestant, who had been sent abroad by the Calvinists to negotiate a union with the Lutherans and who had remained to serve as a major in the army of Maria Theresa and later to tutor her children. Returned to France, he had fallen into misery, and the son had had to learn his letters, he said, from papers picked up in the street. His father taught him Latin and mathematics. On his deathbed, the old man gave him a Plutarch and told him that he himself could have wished to play the role of Caius Gracchus. He made the boy swear on his sword that he would defend to the death the interests of the people.

This was in 1780. When the Revolution occurred, Babeuf was twenty-nine. He was present at the taking of the Bastille. He had been employed as a clerk to a registrar of seignorial rights in the little town of Roye in the Somme, and now he burned the seignorial archives. And thereafter, as journalist and official, he threw himself into the work of the Revolution with an earnestness which kept him in continual hot water. He incited the tavern-keepers of the Somme to rebel against paying the old wine tax, which the Constituent Assembly had abolished; he sold up the expropriated estates and divided the village common among the poor. Babeuf went too fast for his province. The landlords and the local authorities kept arresting him and clapping him in jail. At last in 1793 he was given a post in Paris in the Bureau of Subsistence of the Commune. The privation in Paris was terrible, and Babeuf found a leak in the bureau's accounts. He came to the conclusion that the authorities were deliberating producing a famine in order to exploit the demand for foodstuffs, and he had a commission of investigation appointed. The government suppressed the commission, and Babeuf soon found himself pursued for what were apparently framed charges of fraud in connection with his administration in the provinces.

After Thermidor, he rallied around him those elements of the Revolution who were trying to insist on its original aims. In his paper, The Tribune of the People, he denounced the new constitution of 1795, which had abolished universal suffrage and imposed a high property qualification. He demanded

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not merely political but also economic equality. He declared that he would prefer civil war itself to "this horrible concord which strangles the hungry." But the men who had expropriated the nobles and the Church remained loyal to the principle of property itself. The Tribune of the People was stopped, and Babeuf and his associates were sent to jail.

While Babeuf was in jail, his seven-year-old daughter died of hunger. He had managed to remain poor all his life. His popularity had been all with the poor. His official posts had earned him only trouble. Now, as soon as he was free again, he proceeded to found a political club, which opposed the policies of the Directory and which came to be known as the Society of the Equals. They demanded in a "Manifesto of the Equals" (not, however, at that time made public) that there should be

> no more individual property in land; the land belonged to no one. . . . We declare that we can no longer endure, with the enormous majority of men, labor and sweat in the service and for the benefit of a small minority. It has now been long enough and too long that less than a million individuals have been disposing of that which belongs to more than twenty millions of their kind. . . . Never has a vaster design been conceived or put into execution. Certain men of genius, certain sages, have spoken of it from time to time in a low and trembling voice. Not one of them has had the courage to tell the whole truth. . . . People of France! open your eyes and your heart to the fullness of happiness. Recognize and proclaim with us the Republic of Equals!

The Society of Equals was also suppressed; Bonaparte himself closed the club. But, driven underground, they now plotted an insurrection; they proposed to set up a new directory. And they drafted a constitution which provided for "a great national community of goods" and worked out with some precision the mechanics of a planned society. The cities were to be deflated and the population distributed in villages. The State was to "seize upon the new-born individual, watch over his early moments, guarantee the milk and care of his mother and bring him to the *maison nationale*, where he was to acquire the virtue and enlightenment of a true citizen." There was thus to be equal education for all. All able-bodied persons were to work, and the work which was unpleasant or arduous was to be accomplished by everybody's taking turns. The necessities of life were to be supplied by the government, and the people were to eat at communal tables. The government was to control all foreign trade and to pass on everything printed.

In the meantime, the value of the paper money had depreciated almost to zero. The Directory tried to save the situation by converting the currency into land warrants, which were at a discount of 82 percent the day they were issued; and there was a general belief on the part of the public that the government had gone bankrupt. There were in Paris alone some five hundred thousand people in need of relief. The Babouvistes placarded the city with a manifesto of historical importance; they declared that Nature had given to every man an equal right to the enjoyment of every good, and it was the purpose of society to defend that right; that Nature had imposed on every man the obligation to work, and that no one could escape this obligation without committing a crime; that in "a true society" there would be neither rich nor poor; that the object of the Revolution had been to destroy every inequality and to establish the well-being of all; that the Revolution was therefore "not finished," and that those who had done away with the Constitution of 1793 were guilty of *lèse-majesté* against the people.

In the cafés, they were singing a song composed by a member of the society: "Dying of hunger, dying of cold, the people robbed of every right . . . newcomers gorged with gold, who have given neither work nor thought, are laying hold on the hive; while you, the toiling people, eat iron like an ostrich. . . . A brainless double council, five frightened directors; the soldier pampered and petted, the democrat crushed: *Voilà la République!*"

Babeuf's "insurrectionary committee" had agents in the army and the police, and they were doing such effective work that the government tried to send its troops out of Paris, and, when they refused to obey, disbanded them. During the early days of May, 1796, on the eve of the projected uprising, the Equals were betrayed by a stool pigeon and their leaders were arrested and put in jail. The followers of Babeuf made an attempt to rally a sympathetic police squadron, but were cut down by a new Battalion of the Guard which had been pressed into service for the occasion.

Babeuf was made a public example of by being taken to Vendôme in a cage—an indignity which not long before had filled the Parisians with fury when the Austrians had inflicted it on a Frenchman.

His defense, which lasted for six sittings of the court and fills more than three hundred pages, is an impressive and moving document. Babeuf knew well that he was facing death and that the Revolution was doomed. The French had been finally exhausted with the birth-throes of the seven years which had passed since the taking of the Bastille. All the fervor of which they were still capable was siphoned off into the revolutionary army, which that spring was being led by Bonaparte to the victories of the Italian campaign. At home, since the Terror, they were shy of violence. Babeuf had united with the last of the Jacobins, and the people had had enough of them. Uncompromising principles and the guillotine were inextricably associated in their minds; they were glad to be free to live, and a period of frivolity had set in. And the bourgeois instinct for property was already becoming the overmastering motive, taking the place of other instincts and ideals: all those who had succeeded in getting anything clung to it with desperate tenacity; the idea of redistribution fright-

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ened them out of their wits. And the poor were no longer prepared to fight. Babeuf knew all this, and his defense has a realism and sobriety which suggest much later phases of socialism. It is no longer the rhetoric of the Revolution, grandiose, passionate and confusing. At a time when people in general were able to think only of the present, Babeuf looked both backward and forward; at the moment when a society still talking the language of the ideals of the Revolution, libertarian, equalitarian and fraternal, had passed completely into the hands of a new owning class, with its new privileges, injustices and constraints, Babeuf, with great courage and insight, was able to analyze the ambiguous situation. His defense is like a summing-up of the unrealized ideas of the Enlightenment and a vindication of their ultimate necessity. And it has moments of grandeur which it is not absurd to compare to Socrates' Apology.

The real issue in this case, says Babeuf, is less the question of conspiracy against the government than the spreading of certain ideas subversive to the dominating class. He has seen under the Directory, he says, the sovereignty of the people disregarded, and the right to elect and be elected reserved to certain castes. He has seen privilege brought back again. He has seen the people deprived of freedom of the press and assembly, and the right to petition and the right to carry arms. He has seen even the right to ratify the laws taken away from the citizens and vested in a second chamber. He has seen an executive power set up which is out of the reach of the people and independent of popular control. He has seen relief and education forgotten. And finally he has seen the Constitution of 1793, which had been approved by nearly five million votes with genuine popular feeling behind them, replaced by an unpopular constitution, put over by scarcely a million dubious ones. So that if it were true that he had conspired (it *was* true, though at the trial he denied it), it would have been against an illegitimate authority. The cause of revolutions is the bending beyond what they can bear of the human springs of society. The people rebel against the pressure; and they are right, because the aim of society is the good of the greatest number. If the people still finds itself bent double, it doesn't matter what the rulers say: the revolution is not finished yet. Or if it is, they have committed a crime.

Happiness, in Europe, is a new idea. But now we know that the unhappy are the real powers of the earth; they have the right to speak as the real masters of the governments that neglect them. We know that every man has an equal right to the enjoyment of every benefit, and that the real purpose of society is to defend this right and to increase the common benefits. And work, like enjoyment, should be shared by all. Nature has decreed that we all must work: it is a crime to evade this duty. And it is a crime to take for oneself at the expense of other people the products of industry or the earth. In a society which was really sound, there would be neither poor nor rich. There would be no such system of property as ours. Our laws of heredity and inalienability are "humanicide" institutions. The monopoly of the land by individuals, their possession of its produce in excess of their wants, is nothing more or less than theft; and all our civil institutions, our ordinary business transactions, are the deeds of a perpetual brigandage authorized by barbarous laws.

But you say that it is my ideas, he goes on, which would send society back to barbarism. The great philosophers of the century did not think so; and it is they whose disciple I am. You should be arraigning the monarchy for having shown itself so much less inquisitorial than the government of our present Republic; you should arraign it for not having prevented me from getting hold of the pernicious books of the Mablys, the Helvétius, the Diderots, the Jean-Jacques. Philanthropists of today! if it had not been for the poisons of these older philanthropists, I might share your moral principles and your virtues: I might have been moved by the tenderest solicitude for the minority of the mighty of this world; I might have been pitiless for the suffering mass. Didn't you know that you had included in your indictment a passage I had quoted from Rousseau which was written in 1758? He had spoken of "men so odious as to dare to have more than enough while other men are dying of hunger." I do not hesitate to make this revelation because I am not afraid of compromising this new conspirator: he is beyond the jurisdiction of your tribunal. And Mably, the popular, the sensitive, the human, was not he an even deeper-dyed conspirator? "If you follow the chain of our vices," he said, "you will find that the first link is fastened to the inequality of wealth." The Manifesto of the Equals, which had never been brought out of the dust of the box where we had put it but about which so much fuss has been made, went no further than Mably and Rousseau. And Diderot, who said that from the scepter to the crozier, humanity was ruled by personal interest, and that personal interest arose from property, and that it was idle for philosophers to argue about the best possible form of government so long as the axe had not been laid to the roots of property itself—Diderot, who asked whether the instability, the periodic vicissitudes of empires, would be possible if all goods were held in common, and who asserted that every citizen should take from the community what he needed and give to the community what he could and that anyone who should try to restore the detestable principle of property should be locked up as an enemy of humanity and a dangerous lunatic!—Citizens, "dangerous lunatic" is precisely what you have called *me* for trying to introduce equality!

And Tallien and Armand de la Meuse, who are now sitting in the Directory and the legislature—why have they not been called to the bar? Tallien, only a few years ago when he was editing The Sans-Culottes' Friend, was telling us that "the anarchy would cease as soon as wealth was less unequal." And Armand de la Meuse was assuring

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the Convention that "every candid person must admit that political equality without real equality is only a tantalizing illusion" and that the "cruelest error of the revolutionary bodies has been their failure to mark the limits of property rights and their consequent abandonment of the people to the greedy speculations of the rich."

Christ has told us to love our neighbor and to do as we would be done by; but I admit that Christ's code of equality caused him to be prosecuted for conspiracy.

The way things were going would have been brought home to me even if I had not been able to see. When I was sent to jail for my writings, I left my wife and my three unfortunate children helpless during the horrible famine. My little girl of seven died when the allowance of bread was cut down to two ounces; and the others became so thin that when I saw them again, I could hardly recognize them. And we were only one among thousands of families—the greater part of Paris, in fact, whose faces were blighted by the famine, who tottered when they walked.

And if I have desired for them a better system, it is not that I have expected to impose it by force. All I want is that the people should be enlightened and convinced of their own omnipotence, of the inviolability of their rights, and that the people should demand their rights. I want, if need be, that they should be shown the way to demand their rights; but I want nothing except subject to the people's consent.

But where Mably and Diderot and Rousseau and Helvétius have failed, how should I have hoped to succeed? I am a lesser disciple of theirs, and the Republic is less tolerant than the monarchy.

He reminded them of the fact that the royalists of the Vendémiaire conspiracy had all been pardoned and set free, and that the party of the Pretender had been saying openly that the new constitution would suit them very well if there were one director instead of five. The Society of Equals had reason to believe that a massacre was being plotted against them, like the massacres of republicans in the Midi, and Babeuf launched upon so provocative a picture of the hounding of the republicans by the forces of reaction that the judges made him stop his speech and would not let him go on till the next day.[1]

Babeuf declared in conclusion that the death sentence would not surprise or frighten him. He had got used to prison and violent death in the course of his revolutionary mission. It was abundant consolation, he said, that his wife and children and those of his followers had never been ashamed of what had happened to them, but had come there to the courtroom to sustain them.

> But, oh, my children [he concluded], I have from my place above these benches—the only place from which my voice can reach you, since they have even, contrary to law, made it impossible for me to see you—I have only one bitter regret to express to you: that, though I have wanted so much to leave you a heritage of that liberty which is the source of every good, I foresee for the future only slavery, and that I am leaving you a prey to every evil. I have nothing at all to give you! I would not leave you even my civic virtues, my profound hatred of tyranny, my ardent devotion to the cause of Liberty and Equality, my passionate love of the People. I should make you too disastrous a present. What would you do with it under the monarchic oppression which is infallibly going to descend on you? I am leaving you slaves, and it is this thought alone which will torture my soul in its final moments. I should equip you, in this situation, with advice as to how to bear your chains more patiently, but I do not feel that I am capable of it.

The vote, after much disagreement, went against Babeuf. One of his sons had smuggled in to him a tin dagger made out of a candlestick; and when he heard the verdict pronounced, he stabbed himself in the Roman fashion, but only wounded himself horribly and did not die. The next morning (May 27, 1797) he went to the guillotine. Of his followers thirty were executed and many sentenced to penal servitude or deportation.

Before he died, Babeuf had written to a friend, to whom he had confided his wife and children: "I believe that in some future day men will give thought again to the means of procuring for the human race the happiness which we have proposed for it."

His defense did not reach the world for almost a hundred years. The newspapers reported only part of it, and the text was not published till 1884. His name remained a bugbear for decades.

EDMUND WILSON.

[1] This episode and this whole period in France suggest illuminating analogies with the present phase in Soviet Russia, which seems to combine some of the features of the self-devouring dissensions of the Terror with something of the reactionary bureaucracy of the Directory. In that age of confusion, the Directory and Babeuf were bringing the same charges against one another: each was accusing the other of having embarked on a course that was calculated to bring back the monarchy (the prosecutor contending that the communism of the Equals would result in desolation and chaos, and thus make the return of monarchy inevitable), just as Trotsky and his Stalinist accusers both denounce one another for playing the game of fascism. Yet the French Republic with its solid gains survived both the Directory and Napoleon, just as the Soviets with their gains must survive whatever present confusions of purpose and conflicts of personal ambition lie behind the Trotskyist trials.

To the Explorers

There is much space still to explore and conquer
Between these old seas, on this well known ground;
The world is wide as always, and as always
Wider than the world is round.

Last league of water sailed, last island settled,
Still must explorers voyage hardy hearted.
Peace is a country yet unknown, and Plenty
Has been discovered but is not yet charted.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

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The Throwaways

A New Threat to the Small-City Newspaper

RESIDENTS of many American cities and towns find on their doorsteps daily a newspaper which they have neither ordered nor paid for. It is usually tabloid in size, with four, six or more pages. It contains a culling of the bigger telegraph stories; a scattering of local items; a padding of comic strips and features. These, and advertisements—so many advertisements that down the street a standard-size newspaper may be slowly dying of anemia, its life blood sucked away by this voracious cuckoo fledgling dropped in its nest by the depression.

The free-distribution paper did not originate with the depression. The first "shoppers' guide" on record was founded in Cleveland in 1921. Between 1921 and 1929 some thirty-six others were launched, thirty-one of which met an early death. But between 1930 and September, 1933, according to a survey made by the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, 141 more were started. The mortality was heavy; the ANPA estimates it at 64.7 percent. But where two sickened a third survived and flourished. The Editor and Publisher in 1935 listed fifty-three now operating—a list far from complete because it mentions few outside the larger cities, and it is in towns of 5,000 to 25,000 that the "throwaway" paper thrives.

The depression offered conditions peculiarly fertile for the "shopping-news" publisher. Little capital was required. A mimeograph often served for a printing plant; headquarters might be established in a tourist camp. The proprietor was solicitor, compositor and pressman. His product was not particularly attractive: a splotchy sheet with a few jokes or personal paragraphs breaking the solid phalanx of advertisements. But to stores trying desperately to scale down merchandising costs it offered two potent inducements: low rates and the magic slogan, "100-percent circulation."

The surviving shoppers' guides have long since grown out of the mimeograph stage to the dignity of well equipped printing plants. But that slogan remains their most valuable asset. In the depression years the daily newspaper was the first luxury with which a family could dispense. But the unemployed continued, on a diminished level, to be consumers, and the free-distribution sheet offered merchants an opportunity to reach this clientele. Naturally they chose the free sheet as the vehicle for special bargains. And the old-style publisher scanned his dwindling lineage and wondered why the Chamber of Commerce didn't do something to eradicate these interlopers.

Even in its new prosperity the free sheet continued to operate at a fraction of its competitor's overhead. Its miniature size reduced composition costs. It needed no trained editorial staff; an underpaid boy or girl could round up the fragmentary local news it carried. It had no leased wire; a half-hour pony telephone service from one of the news agencies sufficed. The problem of bookkeeping was greatly simplified by the absence of subscription accounts.

One advantage the standard newspaper did, until recently, retain. It held a monopoly of national—in newspaper parlance "foreign"—advertising, since the national agencies want to know where their clients' money is going and hence demand exact circulation figures, not mere distribution. And it remained the only recognized outlet for legal publications. Many a small-town paper has been kept solvent by the revenue from delinquent tax lists, which has been swollen to unprecedented volume by the depression.

Recently, however, free-distribution papers have hit upon a device to qualify for legal notices and foreign contracts while still preserving their claim of "100-percent coverage." One section still goes to every doorstep or post-office box. But there is also a supplementary section, containing additional features, comics and probably a serial story. This is delivered only to paid subscribers. The subscription rate is nominal—perhaps five cents a week—and some papers have been surprisingly successful in building up a paying clientele.

Newspapers have scoured their wits for some effective way of meeting this lethal competition. Some have fought fire with fire—in certain instances successfully—by publishing free sheets of their own. Some have considered going over wholly to a free-distribution basis. But this means a sacrifice of revenue which few are prepared to make. A circulation of 3,000 copies at $5 a year—an intentionally low estimate—brings in $15,000 a year. And this is a big item in a small budget.

The majority have done nothing so drastic. They struggle on, pruning costs, conducting circulation drives, fighting for advertising—and in the process becoming worse newspapers rather than better. For in this jungle warfare it is not necessarily the fittest that survives. The free sheet has few journalistic inhibitions. It is frankly an advertising medium, and only incidentally a newspaper. It is willing to promise an advertiser almost anything he asks, from front-page position to lavish free "puffs" or "readers." The old-line paper must make similar concessions or lose out. Striving to build up circulation to

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combat that claim of "100-percent coverage," the standard paper turns to comic strips, serial stories, recipes, columns of personalia, at the expense of real news.

And worst of all, the temptation to compromise, to straddle, becomes almost irresistible. The publisher who once had courage to tell an advertiser to go to hell when he demanded the suppression of a story no longer dares. That one account may mean the difference between solvency and bankruptcy. The editor who once took an aggressive stand on controversial issues finds himself pulling his punches. The paper needs friends, not enemies. Whatever independence and integrity a newspaper may have boasted is almost certain to be undermined in the struggle for survival with an opposition that recognizes no journalistic standards.

It is here that the plight of the small town press takes on a broader significance. Millions in our smaller cities depend upon their local newspapers for their knowledge of what is going on in the world. These newspapers are being forced to lower their standards and cheapen their quality at the moment when the need for complete and unwarped information is most acute. The demise of one more individual business in the profit scramble of capitalistic society is a private tragedy. But the degradation of a large sector of the nation's press is a matter of public concern.

TED OLSON.

A Communication to Nancy Cunard[1]

These are not words set down for the rejected
Nor for outcasts cast by the mind's pity
Beyond the aid of lip or hand or from the speech
Of fires lighted in the wilderness by lost men
Reaching in fright and passion to each other.
This is not for the abandoned to hear.

It begins in the dark on a box-car floor, the groaning timber
Stretched from bolt to bolt above the freight-train wheels
That grind and cry aloud like hounds upon the trail, the breathing weaving
Unseen within the dark from mouth to nostril, nostril to speaking mouth.
This is the theme of it, stated by one girl in a box-car saying:
"Christ, what they pay you don't keep body and soul together."
"Where was you working?" "Working in a mill-town."
The other girl in the corner saying: "Working the men when we could get them."
"Christ, what they pay you," wove the sound of breathing, "don't keep shoes on your feet.
Don't feed you. That's why we're shoving on."

(This is not for Virginia Price or Ruby Bates, the white girls dressed like boys to go; not for Ozie Powell, six years in a cell playing the little harp he played tap-dancing on the box-car boards; not for Olen Montgomery, the blind boy traveling towards Memphis that night, hopping a ride to find a doctor who would cure his eyes; not for Eugene Williams or Charlie Weems, not for Willie Robertson nor for Leroy and Andy Wright, thirteen years old the time in March they took him off the train in Paint Rock, Alabama; this is not for Clarence Norris or Haywood Patterson, sentenced three times to die.)

This is for the sheriff with a gold lodge pin
And for the jury venireman who said: "Now, mos' folk don't go on
And think things out. The Bible never speaks
Of sexual intercourse. It jus' says a man knows a woman.
So after Cain killed Abel he went off and knew a woman
In the land of Nod. But the Bible tells as how
There couldn't be no human folk there then.
Now, jus' put two and two together. Cain had offspring
In the land of Nod so he musta had him a female baboon
Or chimpanzee or somethin' like it.
And that's how the nigger race begun."

This is for the Sunday-school teacher with the tobacco-plug
Who addressed the jury, the juice splattering on the wall,
Pleading: "Whether in overalls or furs a woman is protected by the Alabama law
Against the vilest crime the human species knows. Now, even dogs choose their mates,
But these nine boys are lower than the birds of the air,
Lower than the fish of the sea, lower than the beasts of the fields.
There is a law reaching down from the mountaintops to the swamps and caves—
It's the wisdom of the ages, there to protect the sacred parts of the female species
Without them having to buckle around their middles
Six-shooters or some other method of defense."

This is set down for the others: people who go and come,
Open a door and pass through it, walk in the streets
With the shops lit, loitering, lingering, gazing.
This is for two men riding, Deputy Sheriff Sandlin, Deputy Sheriff Blacock,
With Ozie Powell, handcuffed. Twelve miles out of Cullman
They shot him through the head.

[1] Acknowledgment for much of the detail in this poem is due to Carleton Beals.—K. B.

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The Testimony

Haywood Patterson: Victoria Price:

"So here goes an I shell try
Faitfully an I possibly can — "I
Reference to myself in particularly — cain't
And concerning the other boys personal pride — remember."
And life time upto now.
You must be patiene with me and remember — "I
Most of my English is not of much interest — cain't
And that I am continually — remember."
Stopping and searching for the word."

So here goes and I shall try faithfully as possible to tell you as I understand if not mistaken that Olen Montgomery, who was part blind then, kept saying because of the dark there was inside the box-car and outside it: "It sure don't seem to me we're getting anywheres. It sure don't seem like it to me." I and my three comrades whom were with me, namely Roy Wright and his brother Andy and Eugene Williams, and about my character I have always been a good natural sort of boy, but as far as I am personally concerned about those pictures of me in the papers, why they are more or less undoubtedly not having the full likeness of me for I am a sight better looking than those pictures make me out. Why all my life I spent in and around working for Jews in their stores and so on and I have quite a few Jew friends whom can and always have gave me a good reputation as having regards for those whom have regards for me. The depression ran me away from home, I was off on my way to try my very best to find some work some elsewhere but misfortune befalled me without a moving cause. For it is events and misfortune which happens to people and how some must whom are less fortunate have their lives taken from them and how people die in chair for what they do not do.

The Spiritual for Nine Voices

I went last night to a turkey feast (oh, God, don't fail your children now!)
My people were sitting there the way they'll sit in heaven
With their wings spread out and their hearts all singing
Their mouths full of food and the table set with glass
(Oh, God, don't fail your children now!)
There were poor men sitting with their fingers dripping honey
All the ugly sisters were fair. I saw my brother who never had a penny
With a silk shirt on and a pair of golden braces
And gems strewn through his hair.

(Were you looking, Father, when the sheriffs came in?
Was your face turned towards us when they had their say?)

There was baked sweet potato and fried corn pone,
There was eating galore, there was plenty in the horn.

(Were you there when Victoria Price took the stand?
Did you see the state attorney with her drawers in his hand?
Did you hear him asking for me to burn?)

There were oysters cooked in amplitude
There was sauce in every mouth.
There was ham done slow in spice and clove
And chicken enough for the young and the old.

(Was it you stilled the waters on horse-swapping day
When the mob came to the jail? Was it you come out in a long tail coat
Come dancing high with the word in your mouth?)

I saw my sister who never had a cent
Come shaking and shuffling between the seats.
Her hair was straight and her nails were pointed
Her breasts were high and her legs double-jointed.
(Oh, God, don't fail your children now!)

The Sentence

Hear how it goes, the wheels of it traveling fast on the rails
The box-cars, the gondolas running drunk through the night.
Hear the long high wail as it flashes through stations unlit
Past signals ungiven, running wild through a country
A time when sleepers rouse in their beds and listen
And cannot sleep again.
Hear it passing in no direction, to no destination
Carrying people caught in the box-cars, trapped on the coupled chert-cars
(Hear the rattle of gravel as it rides whistling through the day and night.)
Not the old or the young on it, nor people with any difference in their color or shape,
Not girls or men, Negroes or white, but people with this in common:
People that no one had use for, had nothing to give to, no place to offer
But the cars of a freight-train careening through Paint Rock, through Memphis,
Through town after town without halting.

The loose hands hang down, and swing with the swing of the train in the darkness,
Holding nothing but poverty, syphilis white as a handful of dust, taking nothing as baggage
But the sound of the harp Ozie Powell is playing or the voice of Montgomery
Half-blind in oblivion saying: "It sure don't seem to me like we're getting anywheres.
It don't seem to me like we're getting anywheres at all."

KAY BOYLE.

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Washington Notes

The New Soil-Conservation Law Tackles the Dust Bowl—Absentee Owners—Who Is Going to Get Bonneville Power?

DURING the last few months, six Great Plains states have passed the standard soil-conservation-district law recommended by the Department of Agriculture. There are great hopes that the remaining Great Plains states will enact it before another year is out. New Deal experts here are quietly jubilant. They regard the adoption of this law as a major victory.

The soil-conservation districts which the new law authorizes are interesting agencies of democracy. In essence, they are countryside town meetings, with something of the sovereign powers of coercion once exercised by the town meetings of New England. For example, a group of farmers, or a single farmer, in a dust-bowl district may propose that a certain proportion of all farms be planted in cover crops. This proposal then goes to a referendum vote. If it is approved by a majority, it thereafter becomes a district regulation with the force of law. If a dissenting farmer obstinately insists on leaving his fields bare, a prey to the devouring winds, the district's board of supervisors has the right to enter upon his land, seed it with a specified cover crop and assess the costs against the owner through court action. This standard conservation-district law, it should be said, is being urged on the legislatures of all states, although it is expected to have its earliest and most helpful effect in the dust-bowl region.

The technical problems of the dust bowl have been largely solved by the brilliant pioneering of the federal Soil Conservation Service, headed by Mr. H. H. Bennett. Some of the SCS's achievements, to this lay observer, seem little short of New Testament miracles. As most people now know, the Southwestern dust storms have created true desert conditions, with long stretches of desolate sand dunes. During the last year, an SCS expert, Mr. C. J. Whitfield, has developed a technique for reversing the process of dune formation. North of the SCS's headquarters at Dalhart, Texas, he has a family of pet dunes that, under his skillful tutelage, have flattened themselves back into level and potentially fertile fields. Some of his dunes, a year ago, were twenty-six feet high.

Now that the standard conservation-district law is being generally adopted, experts here are pressing to have two further steps taken. The first is the coördination of federal, state and local governmental agencies. Nearly six months ago, Mr. Roosevelt's Great Plains committee, headed by Mr. Morris Llewellyn Cooke, recommended the creation of an overriding Great Plains Authority. The recommendation was transmitted to Congress by the White House, and there it has since slumbered. Experts point out that the dust-bowl region includes parts of five states, and the likelihood of ever obtaining prompt and simultaneous action from five state legislatures is so small as to be non-existent. The experts want either a separate Great Plains Authority, or else the enactment of Senator Norris' bill establishing regional soil-conservation and water-power authorities for the whole country.

The second step concerns absentee ownership. There is no mystery about the immediate cause of the dust bowl. It was the "suitcase" farmer, the city man with capital who invaded the Great Plains during and just after the World War, ripped up its grass with power machinery and exposed the underlying soil to the wind. After making unconscionable profits from a few wheat harvests, these suitcase farmers, for the most part, decamped, leaving their farms in the hands of life-insurance companies, banks and private lenders. These absentee owners are the non-coöperators in the SCS's programs, and their continued neglect of their land is the greatest single obstacle in the way of the dust bowl's rehabilitation.

The new soil-conservation-district law forms a partial means of forcing absentee owners to coöperate in conservation programs, but experts here doubt if it will be wholly effective where large tracts of land are owned by remote, powerful institutions. As a supplementary measure, they propose that the federal government be authorized to buy out absentee owners at a negotiated price. They realize that this would mean rewarding the sinful, but they point out that it is cheaper than permitting neglected lands to blow, spreading terror and desolation over great areas.

It is of course obvious that even if all these plans are carried out, there still remains a vast problem of flood control, soil conservation, etc., that must be handled through other means. The chief of these is to apply throughout the entire United States the doctrine of conserving the "Little Waters" with which several government departments are now so deeply concerned. What is needed is primarily successful handling of rainfall from the moment it descends, to prevent its running off at an excessively rapid rate. The solution begins with reforestation and restoring and protecting the natural cover of grasses, and goes on to dams, basins, spillways and other devices that will enable the water to move downhill, as nearly as possible, at the speed it had before the white man came along and upset natural conditions by chopping down trees and plowing under the native sod.

Two quarrels have held up Mr. Roosevelt's power-policy message, which it is now reported will go to Congress this week, probably before these Notes are printed. Both have concerned the great Bonneville power dam, scheduled to begin operation next December. The War Department, which built the dam and will be responsible for its maintenance, wants jurisdiction over the generating machinery; Interior Department officials want jurisdiction to rest with the proposed Columbia River Authority. Both sides are fiercely in earnest over what, to an outsider, seems a trivial matter. The second dispute is over whether or not Bonneville power is to be used to foster a great industrial development at the dam-site. When completed, Bonneville will be one of the few places in the world where ocean-going steamships can approach almost to the source of vast hydro-electric power. Factories can draw raw materials from the seven seas, take their power directly from the Bonneville bus-bar, and sell the finished products the world over. Business groups in Oregon and Washington grow giddy discussing the prospect. The state granges of Oregon and Washington, however, say that Bonneville was not built with national monies to enrich business men, but to provide electricity for

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farmers' coöperatives and public power districts. Senators Schwellenbach and Bone are attempting to compromise the dispute by a provision that 50 percent of Bonneville's power will be reserved for coöperative and public-ownership bodies.

Washington. T. R. B.

Other People's Money

Investment v. Speculation—Interstate Branch Banking and Holding Companies—Keep Corporations and Reserve Banks Separate

SOMETHING seems to have gone wrong, for the nonce at least, with that greatest of all booms in the stock market. One day last week the Exchange managed to stage the slowest day's business in a year and, for some reason, the market for three months has followed a very discouraging pattern—going up and then dropping, then going up again but not so high, then dropping, but a little lower.

The reason for this may be merely a matter of guess. If you are a speculator I have no guess for you that is worth anything. But if you are an investor I think it reasonably accurate to say that so far as you are concerned and no matter what the market does in the future it is now too high.

In 1927 I managed to get into a little controversy about the justification for the market prices. I ventured the suggestion that the market was then too high. I meant too high for investors and I suggested that no man could buy stocks at those levels for an investment and hope to make good on it. I must confess that there were moments after that when I felt pretty uncomfortable. One of the Wall Street journals was kind enough to suggest that I was a "croaker" and that if I took the trouble to understand the "new economics" I wouldn't make such foolish statements. I will have to admit that the statements began to look foolish very soon. U. S. Steel was then selling at 161. The next year it went to 173. The following year it went to 262. But events have proved that this stock was never worth 161 as an investment. As a speculation it may be worth any price, provided it goes up a little later. You could have bought it at 161 and sold next year at 12 points rise and the following year at 101 points rise. But if you had bought for investment and held it you would have had a sad fate.

If you bought at 161, your return to date would have been an average of 2.9 per year dividend, and your $161 stock would not be priced at $100. If you had bought in 1928 at 173, your average yield to date per year would have been 1.7. If you had bought at 262 in 1929 your average yield to date would have been nine-tenths of one percent, only a little more than the amount paid by the stocking bank, and your $262 stock would have a market value of less than $100.

U. S. Steel stock, as an investment, is not worth $126—to which price it went this year. And, it is not worth $100 now—*as an investment*. By investment I mean that if you put $100 into a share and expect to get a fair yield on the money averaged up over a period of years you will be doomed to disappointment. You may buy it now for 99 and it may go back to 126 or more and you would then be able to enjoy a substantial reward for your speculation. But this is not investment. For investment purposes most stocks are now too high.

Some weeks ago I criticized the effort being made in Congress to permit interstate branch banking. My reasons were that to permit interstate branch banking within federal-reserve districts would open the way for holding companies, like the Transamerica Corporation of Mr. Giannini, to get control of branch-banking systems in different reserve districts and thus set up unauthorized nation-wide banking systems not susceptible to intelligent and effective supervision.

Mr. Giannini writes me very courteously calling my attention to an amendment offered by Senator McAdoo which he feels would prevent the thing I am afraid of. The amendment reads as follows:

> Not more than 10 percent of the stock of any member bank shall be held by any one corporation, its holding company or companies, subsidiaries or affiliates; provided, that wherever more than 10 percent of the stock of any member bank is held by any corporation or corporations, such holdings shall be reduced to 10 percent of the stock of the member bank within three years from the time that this legislation goes into effect.

Why should a holding company be permitted to hold 10 percent of the stock of a bank? What object has a holding company in owning bank stock—10 percent or any other percentage? What other object can it have save to control the bank, to have a friendly dip into its resources?

But if you will read this amendment carefully you will see that, under it, a holding company may own more than 10 percent of a bank's stock. It may do so for three years. Thereafter it must reduce its holdings to 10 percent.

But why permit this? Why not force the reduction at once, before it can enjoy any of the privileges of branch banking? The bank does not have to go into interstate branch banking. Just lay down the rule that it cannot do so until its holding company has divested itself of all over 10 percent of the bank's stock. This, I suggest, is what should be required if that principle is adopted. But I would vigorously urge that it be not considered for one instant. No corporation, in my judgment, should be permitted to hold stock in any bank. But above all it should not be permitted to hold stock in a member bank of the Reserve System which is engaged in branch banking and particularly interstate or regionwide branch banking. I therefore suggest the following amendment:

No member bank shall be permitted to avail itself of the provisions of this act until it has satisfied the Comptroller and the Federal Reserve Board that none of its stock is held by any holding corporation of any description, either directly or through subsidiaries or affiliates or individuals acting in its name. And, should the stock of any bank engaging in branch banking within the provisions of this act subsequently come into possession of any holding company, then the Federal Reserve Board is required to revoke its branch-banking privileges within ninety days.

JOHN T. FLYNN.

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Dear Mr. Wilson

DEAR Edmund Wilson: Ten days ago I read—and three times over—in The New Republic your "Mr. More and the Mithraic Bull." You could never conceive, I fancy, how delighted I was later on when the thought struck me that by some droll spiral of chance I could set down a handful of notes which might celebrate that beautiful progression in the development of your subject, together with that precision of the images you have discovered for your meanings, and might verify the truth of the outlines you have drawn with a kind of ruthless grace.

This is how it is: Six or seven years prior to the occasion of your account, I was in London, staying, by design, at the same hotel as an old, beloved professor of my graduate days, a famous scholar—for reasons good enough I must leave out his name. Paul Elmer More, also a friend of his, was there too. What Mr. More's mission in London was I don't remember; my old professor was doing some sort of research at the British Museum. He was there daily. Every evening till past midnight he was in a tiny deserted lounge of the hotel, reading and annotating but willing to talk, bless his heart, you would have loved him! No matter how late I was, he was always up when I got home; and Mr. More, during his stay of ten days or longer, was nearly always there, having either dined with him and spent the evening or come in ahead of me.

I was young and starved from the provinces, and there was a great deal to see in the theatres and galleries, and many people to know. This made it easy for my old friend to ask, in his special way with me, loving and as if slightly indulgent, all about what I had been doing, seeing, where, whom, and so on. "See it, my boy," he said, "while you are ripe for it," and I tried to put in the vivacity he implied, and a dash of cynical bitters to gratify his natural irony. Then presently the real stream of their conversation was under way again. Your portrait of More holds good, despite his fewer years the time I saw him! I can still see that aquiline (how much better I remember my father's look while he was explaining to me the derivation of the word when I first began my Latin! Which is because my father had what was warmer, sweeter and freer) look of Mr. More's, gray, plus some nobility and strength —I should not have said the "much" you use, but I should add this: a pinch of innocence. The deliberate urbanity you mention was there too. It made me think of the verse, "All that gods work is effortless and calm." I recognized the calm but saw it was not effortless. I noted also in Mr. More—it appeared around every corner of his talk—what you saw when he and Dean Gauss were outlawing Joyce. "The same old proprietary interest in the classics which made them unwilling to believe that anything new could have great value." But on this point I felt less heat than you evidently did.

I like this heat you felt, and I suppose among the reasons that cooled me from it was first the fact that in college I had not been where Mr. More was on the faculty. I had not seen him in all that kind of gelatinous aura that colleges may provide for their prominent ones. And, second, I had, through Edmund Gosse largely, been thrown with much of literary London, which I clearly understood was not Sophocles but which, I reflected, since Sophocles was dead and would probably dislike us anyhow, it was a good idea to see. Final judgments seemed doomed to wait a while, in such a fruitful mêlée. I do remember Mr. More's saying that he had enjoyed Mr. Shaw's "Fanny's First Play." And now, from the Gosse parties comes one item that leads straight to you, dear Wilson. I had met there Maurice Hewlett, who was so astonished evidently to hear that my favorite among his works was "Quattrocentisteria," and that it seemed to me to have a general tone like the white green in Medici frescoes, that he invited me to lunch next day. There was a cover of antique velvet, linen over it, and fine old glass; and we talked of the Bella Simonetta in his story, of Neoplatonism and beauty, and of the Dionysian, about which I should have thought he knew a great deal but he proved not to, and then of the Redeemer gods.

My report that evening of the talk with Hewlett brought me into the very presence, as it were, and plump into that Mithra who very nearly plucked out the mystery of you and Dean Gauss and More and Mr. Frank Jewett Mather. I had for some time felt an interest in this subject almost morbid, and full of a strange pressure to follow it up. I should, therefore, quite naturally, know of the Mithraic sacrifice, communion and atonement. (I feel surprised, in fact, when you speak of Dean Gauss's finding the close parallel to Christianity curious; for this, as you know, is a platitude among Redeemer religions, with their origin in the God of Light.) Furthermore I had lately been in Rome and seen that underground chapel once belonging to Mithra and later built over by the Early Church against so dangerous a rival. As to those parallels in doctrine and rite, the Church explained that undeniably they had existed long before the Christian Era; but that the devil had invented them to use against the True Faith when that came along. I knew, of course, the Mithraic elements that you indicate so well, the rapturous, the sordid, the despairing, the immortal promise. But during the lounge discourse I spoke once only, to mention the absurd and evasive brevity of the account of Orphism in the "Encyclopedia Britannica." Otherwise I sat noting the confidence, accuracy, logic that you speak of in Mr. More, reminding myself, also, however, that verily the blood of Mithra's bull would have to pour on these ghostly academic seeds if they were ever to sprout.

I kept like this out of the conversation not because I was awed by the great scholar's knowledge; already I knew that if you are not frightened off by Dante, Shakespeare, Homer, Leopardi, there's no reason to be scared by their professors. What I was terrified of—and still am in life for that matter—was frigidity, that frigidity which, as sleep may do on the sleeper's face, leaves the vital substance cast in the pallor and retreat of death. In his presence and talk I found a stronger sense of this than in his writings.

I was thus freed from being influenced and from being awed, by another factor. I had just been in Italy, daily among great works of art—*una finzione,* etc., as Leonardo would say—the incredible stores of rich minds and boundless, open spiritual powers, not to speak of those passages from the "Vita Nuova," from Petrarch, from Carducci's "Odi Barbari" that I had been committing to memory. I had been in Athens, moving in the levitation of the

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divine light there that floods all things, and checked in the tragic suspension of what is deathless. In Paris I had watched Mounet-Sully's Oedipus in French, the modern language best suited to a stage version of Greek plays. In London Bakst's drawings—very new indeed those days and fructifying—were on exhibition; at Covent Garden were Nijinsky and Diaghilev's ballet, and Chaliapin's Boris. Artists like Sir Alfred East, practising their craft, and happy at that, however deficient in eternity, had taken me in, a giving that was abundant, free-hearted. I felt—certainly at that age I did—that art was passionate intelligence, whose satisfactions were not to be feared but rather invited; and whose forms or ideas were a part of life's participation in larger forms (this for the moment had been rubbed into me by Botticelli's pictures rather than by Ficino and other Platonistic readings). Do you wonder, then, that Mr. More seemed to me to show misconceptions of the classic which, though respectable and even noble, were as off as those recently more fashionable conceptions of the classic which saw it as one grand splurge of faun-libido.

In "Quattrocentisteria" Simonetta's painter had been Botticelli. When that came up and Mr. More said, "I've not decided yet what I think of Botticelli," I felt, I remember, only embarrassment and what a good thing it was some people I knew were not there to hear it, for he was not really that tedious.

Botticelli, thus mentioned, is further to our purpose. "Well, my boy," said my old master, "you see the professor in his old age has taken to art"; and he went on into such names as Raphael, Titian, Michelangelo, Rembrandt. On this subject Mr. More, as he did in general, knew what he thought and was ready to face all down with it; but just then no facing was needed. And now, dear Edmund Wilson, you must get ready to burst with laughing, for what I shall tell you. You spoke of the photograph of the Perugino "Crucifixion" framed on Mr. More's study walls. Didn't I hear my beloved old teacher say that one of the greatest masterpieces in the world was—in his opinion, of course—the "Crucifixion" by Perugino, in Florence? and add, with a satisfaction quite evident, that not many people seemed to know it, doubtless because, he said, of its being in an inconspicuous place? (It is in the Santa Maria Maddalena dei Pazzi). More also rated the picture highly.

To anyone who knows even a little of painting proper, all I need say of this discussion by these great scholars is that, with whatever idea or motif they took up, they might, for all they said, have been talking of it in any art whatsoever; in sum, whatever their depths, they scarcely spoke of painting at all. Great names, naturally, came up for their comment—"Now as to Titian," the judgment began. But all I could think of then to say to Titian was Boswell's question to Dr. Johnson as to Sir, what would you do if you were shut up in a tower with a little baby?

I had looked for a long time that day at the National Gallery's Duccio, and what it was in its infinitely austere language of design and its strict power; and this somehow seemed to supply a good reason for my going off to bed. And so I said good-night and left the scholars to their eminence, the two of them there, as if taking turns, one blowing the horn while the other ascended.

STARK YOUNG.

The Bandwagon

I understand that Mussolini has now done a great deal to put down the terrible cruelty with which the wild birds were treated in Italy. What a tremendous amount of other good things, too, he has done.—*From "I Go Wandering," by Florence Riddell.*

It is not true that [in Spain] there have been fewer atrocities on one side than the other. There have been no atrocities on the Nationalist side. . . . If the National Government errs, it errs on the side of informality, of clemency, and of casualness to friend and foe.—*Douglas Jerrold in The American Review.*

If you don't eat here, we'll both starve.—*Sign along the road in front of a North Carolina lunch-wagon.*

Solution of the Babcock murder case was called "an act of God" by Police Commissioner James W. Higgins. . . . "Buffalo was always a law-abiding city and a good place to live in. I think He resented all that has happened and stepped in and cleaned it up. It was an act of Providence," the Commissioner declared.—*News item in The Buffalo, N. Y., Courier Express.*

THE SECRET SIX

If you are just back from Reno, the perfume propre is Tornade, another Revillon parfum for the skin. This wicked essence of sophistication is a cunning bouquet of precious wood oils, a jungle of redolence imprisoned in an extract from the glands of sables. Apply it, not to your hanky or gown, but touch it sparingly to six places on your skin. Then off to cocktails and may Allah protect you!—*From an advertisement of Parfums Revillon in the current issue of Esquire.*

THAT WAS NO SILENCE, THAT WAS MR. HOOVER

Hamilton to break long silence of Republicans with four speeches against democracy.—*From a bulletin of The Leader-Republican, Gloversville, N. Y.*

LONDON, W.C.

Public conveniences erected in the Abbey for Coronation Day reflect neatly the quaint distinction of British social life. Those for the male sex will be marked: Peers, Gentlemen, Men; while others will be labeled: Peeresses, Ladies, Women.—*The Daily Mirror, London, quoted in The New Statesman.*

UP-THE-REBELS DEPARTMENT

Proximity of Hotel Vista Del Arroyo to Colorado Street bridge appears likely, after years of controversy, to be the deciding factor in the plan to erect a barricade to prevent persons from leaping to death from the span.

Wealthy guests of the exclusive hotel, it was learned today, have expressed a distaste for occupying rooms from which it would be possible to see despondent persons leap from the bridge railing.—*From a Pasadena dispatch to The Los Angeles, Calif., Times.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column and $1 will be paid for each item used. Address The Bandwagon, care of The New Republic.—THE EDITORS.

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CORRESPONDENCE

For Government Fellowships

SIR: As one who has had the opportunity of observing closely several white-collar projects of the WPA, I suggest that instead of the pink slip and demoralization, with not a cent in the pocket, with all prestige lost, as the only things with which anyone can leave the WPA at present, the funds now used in sheer pretenses of achievement be converted into Government Fellowships.

Molière, Ibsen, Nietzsche worked themselves through to immortality with such help. Why not try it? Especially since the alternative, the pretext-employment, is basically non-productive. I further suggest that such fellowships be open at first to all those on the WPA (possibly some off) who wish to avail themselves of such an opportunity; then again, that the possibility of renewal for a time be assured upon the basis of the needs created by the work, and not too rigid proof of its progress. It is good to remember that a Ph.D. thesis having scholastic value must take more than three years, and that an expert dramatist like Ibsen, for instance, after the age of fifty, regularly spent two years on one play. . . .

New York City. ELEANOR DUMONT.

Against Earl Browder

SIR: Earl Browder's venomous reply [The New Republic, May 26] to Waldo Frank's very fair and measured proposal for clearing up the doubts and uncertainties, which radicals of every persuasion have about the Moscow trials, is an interesting sample of the type of political controversy into which we have been ushered by the Stalin-Trotsky dispute.

No one has been a more consistent supporter of Russia and the cause of the soviets than Mr. Frank. Nor is there any question about his position among the revolutionary writers. It is a position recognized far beyond the boundaries of his own nation. Yet because Mr. Frank is not altogether certain that *all* of the charges made against Trotsky are true, he is subjected to patronizing abuse. Concern is expressed for "his future development as an artist." He is a weak person, attempting to "play the hero in the drama of great social conflict" and the consequence of his pretension is both "tragedy" and "farce." Thus the politician dismisses the artist who has committed the sin of "publicly broadcasting doubts" though he once "dispelled doubts in others." Mr. Browder no doubt imagines himself delivering a mighty excommunication (the similarities between Communist and Catholic orthodoxy are becoming daily more apparent). In reality he has done no more than to prove that conformity is still the greatest virtue in the politician's hierarchy of values while the artist must be free, even though he is committed to a cause. Mr. Browder's insistence that Mr. Frank's doubts involve him in the necessity of believing "charges unsupported by evidence against a whole party, against a whole government, against a whole people—a family of peoples" is a piece of logic familiar to all who have studied the ways of ruling oligarchies in history. A charge against the oligarch is always a charge against his nation. Do the Russian people really have facilities for arriving at intelligent decisions in regard to the Moscow trials?

These observations are made by one who believes that the present policy of the Communist Party is immeasurably superior to that of the Trotskyites. It is a responsible policy and theirs is an irresponsible one. Trotskyite fanaticism is a peril to the revolutionary cause today. But that does not prove that Trotsky conspired with Japan and Germany or that the Moscow trials are wholly honest. It is just barely possible that the rulers of Russia, forced by the world situation to opportunistic statesmanship, foolishly thought it necessary to tar the more intransigent Marxist foes with the taint of fascism in order to neutralize the charges of these foes against them.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR.

New York City.

Oxford to Harvard

SIR: The enclosed petition, signed by approximately one-half of the American Rhodes Scholars in residence at Oxford, has been sent, with the original signatures, to President Conant of Harvard.

Pembroke College, Oxford, England. WILLEROY WELLS.

[ENCLOSURE]

We, the undersigned American Rhodes Scholars, firmly believing in the principle of free inquiry in American universities, and hoping that the great privately endowed institutions might be foremost in upholding that freedom, regret that Harvard has given cause by the circumstances surrounding the dismissal of Mr. J. R. Walsh and Mr. A. R. Sweezy to fear that liberty of opinion is being curtailed.

RAY MILLER, FRANK CRABILL, THOMAS H. MACBRIDE, T. F. LAMBERT, PHILIP M. KAISER, D. J. BOORSTIN, G. A. CRAIG, R. C. BARNARD, J. G. WILLIAMSON, W. D. LEWIS, W. W. ROSTOW, F. GILLEN, ARNOLD C. SMITH, OSCAR GASS, E. K. MCCLASKEY, WALTER CHUDNOWSKY, WILLEROY WELLS, CARL SOLBERG, DONALD WHEELER, R. W. HORNER, C. A. BANE, DUNCAN LEE, CLAYTON S. WHITE, R. COWAN CLEMENTS, C. LYMAN EMRICH JR., ROBERT W. BARNETT, CHARLES R. SLEETH, JOHN J. ESPEY, H. L. MERILLAT, R. M. GOODWIN, R. B. SCHLATTER, ALBA H. WARREN JR., E. J. STAHR JR., H. W. DAVENPORT, M. MEISSNER, M. WAGNER, H. W. DONOVAN, MURAT WILLIAMS, GEORGE P. CUTTINO, JAMES H. SLEDD, L. E. FRECHTLING, N. R. BEERS.

In Praise of PWA Housing

SIR: T.R.B. in his "Washington Notes" of April 21 made several statements with respect to housing projects initiated as part of the PWA emergency program which were not entirely accurate.

An incorrect impression is given by T.R.B. when he reports that "the apartments are beyond the reach of *persons* who do not average close to $1,800 a year." On the contrary, *families* with annual incomes as low as $875 have already been selected for tenancy in the Harlem project. Quoting Mr. H. A. Gray, Director of Housing, PWA, "the estimated average income of the families who are occupying or will occupy the first five projects now in operation is $574 per year."

Finally, it is difficult to understand why there should appear in the columns of The New Republic, the editors of which are known to be awake to the social importance of a slum-clearance and low-rent-housing program, such disparagement of the efforts thus far made to undertake such a program. In the fifty-one projects developed or nearing completion, the first attempt at low-rent rehousing ever made by public agencies in the United States, construction costs have been too high, true, subsidies too low. Accommodations will not be provided for families in the lowest area of need. Those existing at the charity margin, wage earners receiving under $500 per year, will find themselves ineligible as tenants. It is reasonable to expect that it will take us a great many years of experimentation with new construction techniques and heavier subsidies to reach the ultimate—the availability of homes of modern standard at rents within their means for *all* American workers.

During these first four years, however, most encouraging results have been achieved by Secretary Ickes and his colleagues in the PWA toward serving the needs of "America's ill housed third." Projects, in their site planning, design, interior arrangement, equipment, etc., compare favorably with the best thus far produced in any European country. Their worst feature is that they are too good.

We are looking to the Congress to deliver a relatively adequate slum-clearance and low-cost-housing plan before adjournment. The still unconquered prophets of greed are opposing a public housing program in any form. Via pleas for economy and against taxation for social purposes they carry forward their campaign of

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defeat. Their favorite route is by way of misrepresenting the housing accomplishments of the PWA. Why follow them?

HELEN ALFRED, Secretary,
New York City. National Public Housing Conference.

The Coronation from the Sidelines

SIR: May 12 arrives. As Harry Pollitt says in his Coronation Day message, "London, the capital of the Empire on which the sun never sets, and into whose slums the sun never shines, is agog with excitement and gay with lights and decorations." Many miles of colored cloth have been unrolled, many women have labored in small dark workshops producing Union Jacks, to make this day the climax of the great propaganda campaign.

The ugly Victorian buildings of Oxford Street are covered with rashes of bunting. In every window are faces. At the top of a building in a side street, far above the crowd, is a flimsy-looking stand covered with black tarpaulin. In the stand are gray faces in the midst of dark clothes. The people in it look as though they have come from a workhouse. People are wedged tightly on the pavement, at the edge of which stand soldiers in blue uniforms with swords. The swords look mass-produced. . . .

"What wouldn't I give for a cup of tea?" A man with a loud voice shouts: "Just come through. Hitler has swum the channel." Another looking through one of the many periscopes cries, "Here comes Mussolini." The people under the black tarpaulin high on the roof rise at false alarms and look down into the canyon of the street. There is a constant rustling of hands. We are waiting—for the great circus.

"They're coming!" Hundreds of little black periscopes shoot into the air. The hitherto empty street is suddenly filled with soldiers. Silver breastplates and red plumes. Uniforms which proved impracticable at Waterloo. After the Guards come the Dominion contingents. Canada. South Africa. Tall black African soldiers, their heads thrown proudly back as they march. Australia. . . .

The Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom, of New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Canada pass in closed coaches. A woman behind me who is standing on a stool suddenly begins to shout and wave hysterically. Her shouting resolves itself into, "Isn't she marvelous? Isn't she marvelous?" Queen Mary is large behind the window of the coach. Princess Margaret Rose, a doll with a golden crown fastened to her head, looks out at the crowds as if surprised.

More soldiers. More bands. The great gold coach of the King and Queen appears. Cheering envelops us. High up in the back of the coach are two rigid puppets in white ermine with heavy crowns. Both the King and the Queen are holding scepters. In the King's left hand is an orb. His expressionless, plasticine face turns and looks down into a side street.

People stream away. Peddlers are selling six-penny replicas of the royal coach. A band of ex-servicemen is playing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary." At its head is a large placard with the words, "Limbless but Loyal."

London. MICHAEL YOUNG.

From The New Republic Mail Bag

Miss Muriel B. Carr, an American who has been living in London for several years, disagrees with the criticism of the British Broadcasting Company expressed by Francis Hackett in our issue of April 24. Miss Carr says that the BBC has a well developed social conscience and goes to some lengths to point out social needs in Great Britain. . . . Dr. Alfons Goldschmidt, an exile from Germany now living in New York City, tells us that his degree of Doctor of Political Science from the University of Freiburg in Breisgau has been revoked by decree of the Nazi government. Dr. Goldschmidt says that he taught successfully for thirty-three years in Germany, has done nothing whatever to warrant forfeiture of his degree and challenges the Nazi government to show any legitimate cause why it should be revoked.

Benjamin C. Marsh, executive secretary of the People's Lobby, describes for us efforts being made to induce the Senate committee now considering the Wagner-Steagall housing bill to adopt a competent housing program. The People's Lobby is urging the committee to "limit federal aid to government units which transfer part of taxes on buildings to land values, to protect the government on prices for land, to let it construct factories, etc., if necessary to protect it on prices for building materials, and to go ahead and construct under these conditions, if local authorities don't act."

Marie Hempel, secretary of the Conference for the Protection of Civil Rights, Detroit, Michigan, tells of efforts being made by the Conference to induce the Michigan state legislature to pass collective-bargaining, occupational-disease and anti-injunction legislation at the present session.

Oswaldo Aranha, Brazilian Ambassador to the United States, has promised representatives of the Joint Committee for the Defense of the Brazilian People that his government will permit a commission of American citizens to go to Brazil and interview Luis Carlos Prestes, Mayor Pedro Ernesto, Senator Chermont, Arthur Ewert and other anti-fascist political prisoners recently sentenced in Brazil. The delegation receiving this promise included Rockwell Kent, James Waterman Wise, Mrs. Isobel Walker Soule, David Levinson, Sacha Small and Gifford Cochran.

Paul Garrison, chairman of the Gallup Civil Rights Committee, Box 1119, Sante Fé, New Mexico, informs us that oppression of all kinds is being continued in Gallup and asks support in a fight to obtain a greater measure of civil liberties in New Mexico and to work for the freedom of the frame-up victims convicted in the Gallup murder case of 1935.

Dorothy P. Hill, 420 Jackson Building, Buffalo, New York, writes in her capacity as director of the Summer Institute for Social Progress at Wellesley to tell of plans for the fifth annual session to be held on the Wellesley campus from July 10 to 24. The general theme will be "The World Challenge to Democracy—How Can America Meet It?" and men and women from large and small businesses, from factories and farms, from classrooms and social-service fields will participate in the sessions.

The North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York City, announces "Spanish Aid Week," ending June 9. The object is to raise, through this committee and about one hundred affiliated organizations, $100,000 for Spanish children. Rockwell Kent has designed a special poster that is being used to emphasize the slogan, "That Spanish Children May Live."

Soviet Rusia Today, whose editorial offices are at 824 Broadway, New York City, tells us of a new contest in which the magazine will offer a cash prize of $500, second and third prizes of $150 and $100 and thirty smaller prizes for the best essay in 500 words or less on the subject, "What the Soviet Union Means to Humanity." Full information may be had by writing to the magazine.

What's on the Air?

The annual convention of the American Medical Association is being covered by both major networks. Dr. John H. J. Upham, president-elect, speaks over the Columbia Broadcasting System, Monday, June 7, from 4 to 4:15 P.M. Later in the same day Dr. Charles Gordon Heyd, retiring president, is heard from 6 to 6:15 P.M., over the NBC-Red Network; and Dr. W. W. Bauer gives convention news and highlights on Wednesday, June 9, 6:15 to 6:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

The total eclipse of the sun, referred to by an enthusiastic press department as "the greatest solar show in 1,200 years," also is being covered by both networks. NBC has announced George Hicks with an expedition on an island in the South Seas to describe the show from 3 to 3:15 P.M. on Tuesday, June 8, over the NBC-Blue Network. Later the great event (involving the same sun) is reported by CBS announcer Bill Perry, who is with an expedition observing the eclipse in the mountains of Peru. He is heard from 6:15 to 6:30 P.M. on the CBS network.

Arthur H. Compton, Nobel prize winner and professor of Physics at the University of Chicago, talks of "Human Freedom in the Modern World." Thursday, June 10, 6:20 to 6:30 P.M., NBC-Red Network.

Musical programs of the week include Mischa Levitski, pianist, as guest soloist with a symphony orchestra directed by Eugene Ormandy, Sunday, June 6, 8 to 9 P.M., CBS; and Arthur Fiedler conducting a popular concert of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Thursday, June 10, 8:30 to 9:30 P.M., NBC-Blue Network.

All times given are Eastern Daylight Saving Time.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Roaring Boy

READING this biography,[1] I suddenly remembered how Hart Crane used to write his poems back in 1925. There would be a Sunday afternoon party on Tory Hill, in Slater Brown's unremodeled farmhouse. We would be playing croquet, wrangling, laughing, shouting over every wicket, with a pitcher of hard cider half-hidden in the tall grass beside the court; or else we would be sitting beside the fireplace in the big low-ceilinged kitchen-living-room while a spring rain soaped the window panes. I can't remember any of the stories that were told or why we laughed at them so hard; I can remember only the general atmosphere of youth and high spirits. Hart would be laughing twice as hard as the rest of us, and drinking twice as much, and contributing more than his share of the arguments and jokes and crazy metaphors. Gradually he would fall silent. A moment later he would have disappeared and, in lulls that began to cut the laughter, we would hear a new hubbub through the walls of his room—the phonograph playing a Cuban rumba, the typewriter clacking simultaneously; then the phonograph would run down and the typewriter stop while Hart changed the record, maybe to jazz, maybe to Ravel's "Bolero." Sometimes he stamped across the room, declaiming to the four walls and the slow spring rain.

An hour later, after the rain had stopped, he would appear in the kitchen or on the croquet court, his face flushed, his eyes burning, his already iron-gray hair bristling straight up from his skull. He would be carrying two sheets of manuscript, with words crossed out and new lines scrawled in. "Read that," he would say. "Isn't that the *greatest* poem ever written!"

We would read it dutifully. We would get practically nothing out of it except the pounding meter and a few brilliant images. But we would agree that it was the greatest poem ever written. In Hart's state of exultation, there was nothing else we could do without driving him into rage or tears.

But that isn't the end of the story. During the next week or fortnight, painfully, patiently (and dead sober), Hart would revise his poem, clarifying its images, correcting its meter and searching for the right word sometimes for hours, through piles of dictionaries and thesauruses. Even after the manuscript had been mailed to Poetry or The Dial, and perhaps accepted, he would still have changes to make. There were many poets of the 1920's who tried deliberately to be obscure, veiling a simple idea in phrases that grew more labored and opaque after every revision. With Hart Crane it was the original vision that was complicated and difficult; his corrections always brought it out more clearly. He had something to say and he wanted to be understood, but not at the cost of saying less than his full meaning.

Just what were these "meanings" and these "visions"? They were different, of course, in each new poem, but it seems to me that most of them belonged to a general type that was related to and explained by his method of composition. Essentially Crane was a poet of ecstasy or frenzy or intoxication; you can choose your own word depending on how much you like his work. Essentially he was using rhyme and meter to convey the emotional states that were induced in him by alcohol, music, machinery, intellectual stimulation and the madness of New York in the Coolidge era. At their worst, his poems are ineffective unless read in the mood in which they were written, with a drink at your elbow and a phonograph playing good jazz and somebody shouting, "Isn't that great!" At their best, the poems do their work unaided except by their proper glitter and violence. At their very best, as in "The River," they have an emotional force that has not been equaled by any other American poet of our century.

Hart drank to write: he drank to produce the state of mind that made possible the visions that his poems tried to convey. But the formula could work for only a few years. More and more alcohol was needed: so much of it that it ceased to stimulate and merely befuddled him. He drank again to drown his frustration. He drank in Village speakeasies and waterfront dives; he shouted and broke furniture and insulted everyone within hearing (or sometimes shrieked that he was Christopher Marlowe); then waking after a night in jail he drank again to forget his sense of guilt. It was no use trying to change him: his talent and his weakness were too closely allied.

A few days after he finished "The Bridge," I made the inevitable effort to give him good advice. We were walking together along a rutted back-country road. I said to Hart, bringing the words out haltingly, that he had been devoting his life to the literature of ecstasy. It was more of a psychological strain than most writers could stand. Now perhaps he might shift over to the literature of wisdom, as Goethe had done (I was trying to persuade him by using great examples). It might be years before he could tackle another poem as ambitious as "The Bridge." In the meantime, he might cultivate his talent for unambitious prose.

Hart cut me short. "Oh, you mean that I oughtn't to drink so much."

There was nothing I could say: he had gone so far on his path toward self-destruction that none of his friends could touch him any longer. That night I woke up feeling that he was already doomed, already dead.

For the book that Horton has written about him, I feel almost nothing but admiration. The biographer had to face an extraordinarily difficult problem: to write about an admirable poet who lived an unadmirable life; to set everything down with candor, exaggerating neither the greatness nor the folly; and to tell the truth about escapades and quarrels without offending the poet's family or his friends. In the first two or three chapters, Horton seems a little overwhelmed by his task; at any rate his style becomes stiff and involved. But the book gets better as it goes along, simpler and more direct. The chapter dealing with Crane's adventures in Mexico is really a masterpiece of tact and wisdom, describing sensational events without sensationalism, telling the truth without overemphasis. The last chapter is good too: it contains the best account of the reasons for Crane's suicide that has been written, and also a critical summary of his work which, though not so penetrating as Allen Tate's fine essay, is more matter-of-fact and comprehensive. All through the book, Horton uses quotations from Crane's poems with uncommon skill, so that they not only illuminate the text but also reveal their own eloquent meaning.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

[1] Hart Crane: The Life of an American Poet, by Philip Horton. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 352 pages. $3.

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Political Rigor Mortis

Anarchy or Hierarchy, by Salvador de Madariaga. New York: The Macmillan Company. 244 pages. $2.50.

SALVADOR DE MADARIAGA is a man whose name has become fairly widely known during the last decade. Those who have listened to him at Geneva or elsewhere know him as a witty speaker and a serious mind: he is one of those rare men of affairs whose training for statecraft was not in law or administration: he began as a railroad engineer. Recently, he took the leadership in founding a society devoted to the principle of world association. From such a man one has reason to look for a discussion of politics above the usual level of either the conventional textbook or the current political obscurantist. But one looks in vain. The political axioms on which the book is founded are badly shopworn; and the thought itself is commonplace: what he calls the new doctrine of "unanimous organic democracy" combines with rare skill the worst features of past oligarchies and present dictatorships. In short, "Anarchy or Hierarchy" is a great letdown: it begins with a false alternative, like that the fascists offer between their barbarous creed and communism, and it ends up with a scheme that is "organic" only in the sense that it uses that fashionable adjective to describe itself.

Madariaga begins his little book with a critique of an abstract figment that he calls liberal democracy. In liberal democracy he detects a number of features that "tend to disintegrate and disorganize society": first, liberty, understood as an absolutely individualistic right; second, equality, felt as a leveling agent, inimical by instinct to all hierarchy and special competence; third, democracy, conceived not as an idea but as a method; fourth, capitalism, "left free to roam in search of its prey and allowed to fall back on the State for help when its chase has proved too dangerous"; fifth, labor, with its resentment against the exploiting classes. In his search for a new principle of order Madariaga goes back, in effect, to the Constitution of England in the eighteenth century, before the suffrage had been widened: here, for him, was the proper relation between an aristocracy of active citizens and a subordinate peasantry, a bourgeoisie and a mass of mechanical workers who gravitate, now to the bourgeoisie, now to the peasant-sustained "people."

Aware of the need for a somewhat more positive organization of functions than existed in eighteenth-century England, Madariaga elaborates the conception of a twofold state: a political state whose control would be limited to a small group of active citizens, carefully selected, a state without political parties and without a functional representation of interests; and an economic state, plainly fashioned on Mussolini's corporative state, which would govern production and consumption and public works. This second state would be based on authority, hierarchy and discipline; and, among other things, it would outlaw lockouts and strikes or any other manifestations of a failure to achieve unanimity. In the guise of serious statesmanship, Madariaga has here offered a plan that fails to recognize real social pressures and interests and fails no less dismally to suggest creative political methods for making them responsible and coöperative.

"Anarchy or Hierarchy" is in effect an attempt to assimilate the shibboleths of fascism without accepting in full its mythos of purposeful brutality, its antagonism to free thought, its paranoiac distrust of international coöperation, its childish adulation of war. But in the very fact that Madariaga leans toward fascism in his practical proposals, and leans away from democracy, except in verbal usage, his book dates itself as belonging not to the future, but to a very dead part of the recent past. For by now the weaknesses of fascism, far more serious than those of democracy, are apparent even in the jumpy apprehensiveness of the fascists; while for the rest of the world fascism has become a joke: a rancid joke, no doubt, but a subject for amusement rather than respect, an example to be avoided, not emulated. In no place does Madariaga display more pathetically his lack of scientific realism than in his respectful references to the fascist system—above all, in his stultifying adoption of the principle of unanimity. Real political communities are diverse and many-centered; real political life is an adjustment of conflicts and tensions and coöperations. Any fool can govern by martial law; but only a fool would mistake such a process for government.

At its sordid, ineffectual worst, under parliamentary representation and modern finance capitalism, democracy has at least one residual virtue that all the fascist and authoritarian forms of government have cut themselves off from: the capacity for self-criticism. Ultimately this means the capacity to take a joke, and to see problems of power in their immediate, human terms. The structure of modern democracy as a whole shows great weaknesses, some inherited from the dynastic state, some the result of abstract, legalistic theories of public power; its principle of association is not based upon economic and regional realities; there is a failure of balance in both territorial and economic power; and the organization of political affairs by vague parties places a premium on laziness and irresponsibility that the ambitious are quick to seize for their own advantage; the state itself is a mere patchwork of political and economic forces over which the army, the bureaucracy and the central banks exercise a quiet but decisive power. But in a democracy the component elements of the community are nevertheless still alive: the universities, the press, the trade unions, even the churches, far more than the formal organs of political government, give weight and body to the social processes, and keep the community from that colorless unanimity which characterizes fascism. Under fascism, on the other hand, the main structure of the State presents an imposing façade of centralized unity and power; but unfortunately all the parts are paralyzed or dead—exterminated by the dictatorship in the very act of seizing power or attempting to make it secure.

So long as democracies remain democracies, they have the means of transcending their weaknesses, now in small measures, now in large constitutional changes; the government may fall a dozen times, but the active sources of government are not thereby imperiled: all the eggs are not in one basket—or one might even say, thinking of fascism, all the bad eggs are not in one basket. With fascist dictatorships, on the other hand, an all-or-nothing psychology prevails. They must keep themselves in a state of coercive rigidity; and this deprives them of one of the main attributes of life: the power of adaptation. The strength of democracy is in its parts: what seems like looseness and anarchy is an additional guarantee of survival in a tight place; whereas fascism depends upon the paralyzing effect of a single personality, who tends to become, like Napoleon I, the victim of his own self-deification. Hence fascism must always face the dangerous alternative of "cracking down" or cracking up. It cannot even risk a smile or an inopportune whisper. As a system of government, it lacks human dimensions.

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Today a vast task of renovation lies before every political community, for the application of scientific knowledge, positive experiment and creative thought to the problems of political life still exists only in embryo. But if we cannot continue the effective government of any association, even a lawn-tennis club, under the terms laid down by the abstract political rationalism of the eighteenth century, still less to our purpose are the systematized brutalities and stupidities of totalitarian dictatorships—or such a pre-scientific wishful hodge-podge as Señor Madariaga sets forth.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

Success Story

I Can Get It for You Wholesale, by Jerome Weidman. New York: Simon and Schuster. $2.

THIS IS a novel, hard, wise, slangy, written with such unseen dramatic discipline and such a fine spare working style, that for once you can believe the blurb writers. ("I won't leave this book, Henry, I don't care *who* it is.") It isn't light or flimsy, but it is written all in one direction and getting started on it is like traveling down tracks.

Before the book started, Harry Bogen had been kicked around as a punk of a shipping clerk, and kicked around plenty. So now he's smart and he's got a small roll and he is going to get his back. Which he proceeds to do by rigging a false strike in the garment trade, setting up as a strike-breaking concern, setting up later as a really high-class dress concern. Meanwhile he goes home to his mother, outwits friends and partners, nips a silly romance before it upsets him, enjoys the babes and starts chasing an expensive actress; and when the pace gets too fast he steps out from under, leaving friends, partners, family to hold the bag. Success; he is no longer anybody's punk; it was fun. Weidman handles the strike, the mechanics of rising in business and all such complicated matters with a genius for running through each fascinating move on the board that equals the fleet illusion of the camera, which can focus on a curbstone to give a street tangible reality, yet never bore you to death by counting the million cobblestones that *are* its reality. The novel runs briefly, covers a brief time, but still a lot happens.

In an inverted way there is quite a little feeling in the book—for the dumb partner, Bogen's sly stooge, the girl at the switchboard and all. The best thing in this way is the home in the Bronx, which is a whole close atmosphere of family feeling—indeed, the Jewish momma is beautiful in the way she is thought out and carried in the writing.

The writing is never pretentious, never pulling the dialect stunt or the typographical flash. The short-cut of an I-story often proves a muddy detour for what the author has to say, yet everything here comes through in brevity and clear order and what is more, things rise so delicately above the homely words that you might not think of fine writing unless you tried to duplicate. Take this little phone call:

> "Hello, Heshie," she said, "What's the matter?"
>
> "What do you mean, what's the matter?" I said. "Does something have to be the matter before a fellow can call up his mother?"
>
> "God forbid," she said. "But just the same, what's the matter?" [Skip a few lines here.]
>
> "So I feel all right and you feel all right," she said. "So it's perfect. Now, Heshie, what's the matter?"
>
> I laughed.
>
> "You're okay, Ma," I said. "Try and put one over on you, hah?"
>
> She laughed too. . . .
>
> "All right then, Ma," I said, "I'll tell you why I called. I wanted to know how the blintzes situation was."
>
> "Oh, my God!" she said. "How could a person eat so much? Three times you had them last week. . . ."
>
> "Can I help it, Ma, if you make them so good?"
>
> "Never mind with the fancy talk," she said. "By you it's easy to talk. You say a couple words, you tell me they're this, they're that, they're wonderful, and me, like a dope, I have to start working over the hot stove. So it'll be without blintzes tonight, Heshie. Kill you, it won't. It's not good you should eat so much the same thing. I'll make you a nice piece spring chicken for tonight. You'll have blintzes again in a couple days, maybe next week." . . .

It is an I-story, but because the character is a fellow of precious few emotions, and handles those he has with the distrust of understatement, it is objective—and so successful at it and engaging about it that the reader is really trapped between his sense of inevitable truth and that foolish human desire to *believe* in other humans which makes the happy Hollywood ending a successful formula and suckers of us all. To label a man Villain in life or fiction, of course, is to take the easy way. But when a man may smile and smile, until you see him at his own valuation, and he is still a villain with your five dollars or wife and still understandable—if a writer can set up something like that he has got something. Harry Bogen is slightly a *tour de force;* but he is so soundly built and carried forward that you can see his villainy working from and through its proper setting, and realize: There but for the grace of a couple of apt accidents and happy hormones, go I.

OTIS FERGUSON.

White and Black Hope

The Incredible Messiah: The Deification of Father Divine, by Robert Allerton Parker. Boston: An Atlantic Monthly Press Publication issued by Little, Brown and Company. 335 pages. $2.50.

WHY HAVE the exploits and tribulations of Father Divine become first-page news, when Elder Robinson, the "eternal god" of a "never die" cult which flourished in Negro communities as recently as 1931, went unnoticed in the metropolitan press? The answer is simple—so simple, indeed, that Mr. Parker, for all his study of the various factors that made Divine possible, fails to mention it. Although Elder Robinson and other black men laid claim to divinity, they were content to seek converts among their own people. It remained for Father Divine to arrogate to himself godship over *all* people and to succeed in gaining a sizable number of white converts. That's news in a big way. It is also a caustic commentary on the press, which recognizes the Negro as news seldom save in relation to the dominant race.

A student of messianism and author of a book on the Oneida community, Mr. Parker approaches his task with greater understanding and less racial chauvinism than one generally encounters in newspaper stories, magazine articles and books about this widely publicized cult leader. The result is the most complete, thorough and unbiased account of Father Divine yet published.

"The Incredible Messiah," as the publishers announce, is no formal biography. Rather it is an account of the

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cult's manifestations and a study of the social and economic conditions and the spiritual decadence that produced it. Fully 85 percent of the Divine followers are Negroes—members of the least privileged class in American society. Mr. Parker clearly indicates that these followers are not worshipers of Father Divine because of any peculiar character inherent in the Negro race.

Among a people whose reaction to social ostracism, economic disfranchisement and brutal exploitation he thoroughly understood, Father Divine shrewdly cultivated his religious fakery. Adherents from among the submerged Negro masses were augmented by spiritually frustrated whites, differing entirely in social origin from their newly revealed god and their previously unrecognized brothers. Unintelligible mysticism and a full banquet table were the instruments by means of which the little man welded these elements into a movement of fanatically devoted followers—whose numbers and influence, however, have been grossly exaggerated.

Father Divine's legal difficulties are recorded, life in his heavens and in the Promised Land described, the workings of his various enterprises explained, and the reformation of his converts recounted. Offering affidavits of apostates as evidence, Mr. Parker asserts that Father Divine derives his seemingly inexhaustible supply of money from his followers, who turn over to him their earnings and all their possessions—for in the Kingdom of Heaven there is no need of earthly goods.

HENRY LEE MOON.

Earlier Work

Nights of an Old Child, by Heinz Liepmann. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Company. $2.50.

MANY American readers will know Heinz Liepmann as the author of "Fires Underground," an excellent account of the illegal radical organizations under Hitler which he learned about at first hand and at the terrible cost of imprisonment in a concentration camp. A few, however, will remember him as the author of "Peace Broke Out," one of the many novels of post-war Germany which appeared in translation as Hitler was coming into power. Little better than the general run of these undistinguished books, the novel's chief interest was its documentation of German suffering and confusion. At the time he wrote it, Liepmann himself had his own share of the confusion, and whatever talent his book showed was quite negated by lack of the political realism he later gained. The novel dealt specifically with the effects of the inflation, showing how the fantasy of money values made all social values absurd, but though it vividly reproduced the hysteria and madness of the inflationary period, it saw the inflation not as a political fact but as a kind of natural phenomenon to be met with superstitious acquiescence or with abandonment to a morbid exacerbation of the self and the senses such as we see in so much German painting of the time.

"Nights of an Old Child" is an even earlier book (it appeared in Germany in 1928) and even less perceptive. It was written as an autobiography for a few friends and, we are told, so little intended for publication that Liepmann sued to have it recalled after one of the friends published it without his knowledge; perhaps the privacy of its intention extenuates the book's extreme subjectivism. But as it stands, this story of a childhood and youth made old by war, famine and chaos is so limited by self-pity that it is ineffective as anything but a private document.

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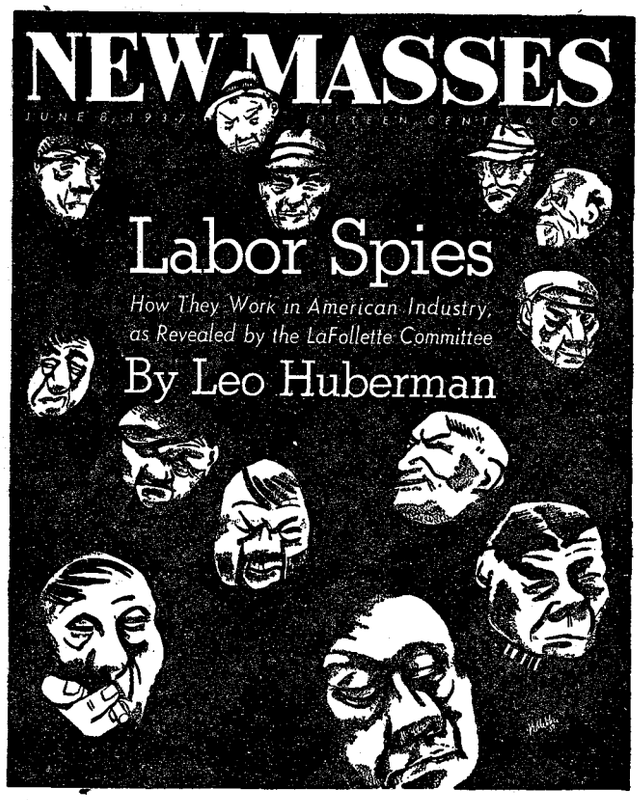
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Lenin: Self-Portrait

The Letters of Lenin, translated by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 509 pages. $4.

LENIN'S letters, as selected and translated by Elizabeth Hill and Doris Mudie, are almost an autobiography. They are somewhat fragmentary and disjointed, since innumerable letters have been lost and the other side of the correspondence is not available. But, taken together with the eleven photographs and the frequent outline summaries, they constitute the best picture of Lenin that has yet appeared in English. A hundred pages deal with the youth of Vladimir Ilych Ulianov (to 1900) and only forty with his six years after October, 1917. His formative and dynamic middle years are here in detail. "Fascinating" is a feeble word to characterize the volume.

"What a swine that Trotsky is! Left phrases and a bloc with the Right against the aims of the Left! He ought to be exposed." Thus wrote Lenin to Alexandra Kollantay on February 17, 1917. In other letters, also, he condemns Trotsky's vacillations. Stalin is mentioned seldom in these pages, but always favorably. Trotsky is the unreliable prima donna, useful, able, sometimes indispensable, but so little trustworthy that Lenin is bitter against him up to the very eve of the Revolution. Zinoviev he holds in higher esteem, but the other "old Bolsheviks," whom Trotsky accuses Stalin of having "framed" and murdered, fare ill here. During the crucial years 1914 to 1917, Radek, Pyatakov, Bukharin and other recent Trotskyite conspirators are described by Lenin as "unstable," "wavering" and addicted to liaisons with "the foreign lackeys of opportunism."

In short, this publication of Lenin's correspondence will bring little comfort to the American Committee for the Defense of Leon Trotsky. Trotskyites will doubtless allege dishonest editing, mistranslation and biased selection. Only 340 letters out of more than a thousand published in Russian are reproduced here. The honesty and accuracy of the work done by Miss Hill and Miss Mudie can be judged only by those having access to the originals. But their work rings true and will probably stand up well under the test of time and textual criticism. Such debatable "Stalinist falsifications" as may be present in the Russian volumes are probably sins of omission, not of commission. Lenin, to be sure, evaluated Stalin's present-day enemies and even Stalin himself quite differently at different times. Only a part of his evaluation is represented here. But these judgments, whether considered by themselves or in conjunction with others, are of the utmost significance and cannot be brushed lightly aside.

Since Lenin's public career can be traced from a great variety of other source materials, the private letters to relatives and friends are the most illuminating in this compilation. In them there often appears an almost Lincoln-like quality of homely kindliness, of sadness and of deep human feeling. There is humor here, too—sometimes unconscious, as when Lenin, "dictator" of all Russia in 1920, humbly promises a Moscow librarian that he will return non-circulating reference books in the morning if only he may borrow them for just a night! There are seventy-five letters to "Darling Mother." They are invariably tender and devoted. They are about money and underwear and health, about courtship in exile and hunting in Siberia and Christmas in Bavaria, about friends and the weather and books. There are letters, personal and political, to (and about) Krupskaya, and letters to his sister and his many scattered companions. The writer of them emerges as a

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peculiarly single-minded genius, possessed of enormous learning and analytical insight. But one feels, inescapably, that the secret of his leadership and of his all-but-miraculous achievement lay less in his remarkable intellectual gifts than in his character as a man, a friend and a comrade. In those roles he here stands self-revealed in simple dignity, perhaps the greatest figure of our times.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN.

The Shortest Way Home

Denmark: The Coöperative Way, by Frederic C. Howe. New York: Coward-McCann. 293 pages. $2.50.

Democracy in Denmark, by Josephine Goldmark and Alice G. Brandeis. Washington, D. C.: National Home Library Foundation. 165 pages. 25 cents.

Denmark: Kingdom of Reason, by Agnes Rothery. New York: The Viking Press. 286 pages. $3.

WHATEVER one's conviction about the nature of capitalist decline and the inevitability of a struggle for power with a ruling class, it is a fact that in certain small countries to the north of Europe major trends have in many instances run counter to those in larger Western nations which still have a democratic form of government. Thus farm tenancy in Denmark, as the authors of these books show, has been rapidly reduced during the past three or four decades until today only about five percent of all Danish farms are operated by tenants. In contrast the percentage of tenant-operated farms in this country went from 28.4 in 1890 to 42.4 in 1930.

And in ways that are less susceptible of statistical proof the trend of life has been in a different direction. There has been little or no evidence of the intense nationalism that has marked not only the dictatorships, but democracies such as Great Britain as well. From the perspective of this new nationalism the fatherland is seen to be a perfected society, possessing all earthly virtues. Criticism of any sort is absolutely forbidden. In contrast a commission created by the Socialist government of Sweden to study the causes of the dwindling birth rate recently made public a report highly critical of the national economy, pointing out that prosperity, so-called, must be far more widely distributed if it is to be possible for large families to maintain a decent standard of living.

Similarly in Denmark, there is a self-criticism that is widely diffused. Mr. Howe makes the excellent point that the Danes have constantly sought to broaden the base of their democracy so that the machinery of government becomes increasingly responsive to the will of the majority. And he points to the opposite trend in the United States, where he finds a growing distrust of popular expression. This increased responsiveness is the reason, perhaps, why Danish governments have moved consistently leftward during the past fifteen years.

That the industrial revolution took place in Scandinavia considerably later than in the rest of Europe may be one reason why these small countries have come through the post-war crisis so well. Certain social techniques, the cooperative movement and trade-union organization, took hold as industry developed. The family economy was not so violently dislocated because ways of adjusting it to the new machine production were at hand.

But this is not the only reason for the comparative success of the northern democracies. In Mrs. Brandeis' excellent translation of A. H. Hollman's study of the Danish folk high school there is the story of a defeated people who

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reëducated themselves; education extended into every sphere of life, the coöperative movement, the trade unions, political parties. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the folk high school has created what is a new kind of nationalism, a nationalism that is directed toward the well-being of an entire people rather than beyond national boundaries for conquest.

The latest of these books is Agnes Rothery's "Denmark: Kingdom of Reason." It is an admirable book for the general traveler who is interested not only in the coöperatives and social security but in the daily life of the people, how they live and how they look. As Miss Rothery makes abundantly clear, the Danes are a more gay and warm-hearted people than the Scandinavians to the north. The book is illustrated by remarkably fine photographs made by the author's husband, Harry Rogers Pratt.

These books seem to me hopeful portents, not of Utopia, a perfected society, not even perhaps of a society that is perfectible, but of the possibility of progress under democracy. Diligently and painstakingly the Danes have employed the democratic processes to alter their society. To be sure it has not been entirely remade, and the next European war may reverse the present direction. But that would not lessen the significance of the demonstration. If the past two decades have proved anything, it is that human progress is painfully slow.

MARQUIS W. CHILDS.

Contributors

H. N. BRAILSFORD, London correspondent for The New Republic, has just returned from Spain and plans to send us further first-hand reports from that country.

EDMUND WILSON'S new book of three plays, "This Room, This Gin and These Sandwiches," will be published in The New Republic's Dollar Series next week. He is the author of "Travels in Two Democracies," "Axel's Castle," "The American Jitters" and "I Thought of Daisy."

MARIE DE L. WELCH, a California poet, has contributed to periodicals both here and abroad. She has published two volumes of verse, "Of a Feather" and "Poems."

TED OLSON is editor of The Republican-Boomerang in Laramie, Wyoming.

KAY BOYLE is best known as a writer of novels and short stories, her most recent volume being "The Death of a Man." She is also the author of a book of verse, "A Statement," published in 1932.

LEWIS MUMFORD is the author of many books and articles on art, literature and the social sciences. His books include "The Brown Decades," "Herman Melville" and "Technics and Civilization."

HENRY LEE MOON is employed on the Federal Writers' Project. He was formerly a member of the staff of The Amsterdam News, Harlem weekly.

LIONEL TRILLING is a member of the English department of Columbia University and a contributor of criticism to the reviews.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN, formerly of the faculty of the University of Chicago, has recently accepted a professorship in Political Science at Williams College. A revised edition of his "International Politics" has just been issued by the McGraw-Hill Company.

MARQUIS W. CHILDS, Washington correspondent for The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, is the author of "Sweden: The Middle Way," and of a recent novel, "Washington Calling."

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